

THE
SAILORS.

VOL. I.

THE
SAILORS.

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHORESS OF COUNT DE SANTERRE,
THE ENGLISH NUN, AND LINDOR.

VOL. I.



READING, PRINTED BY R. SNARE AND CO.
AND SOLD BY
CROSBY AND LETTERMAN, STATIONER'S-COURT,
PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON.



1800.



THE SAILORS.

CHAP. I.

Though from the fascinating maid I go,
Her graceful image haunts me every where,
Hangs on the reef, and beckons at the prow;
The fatal beauty seems the seas to brave,
Ascends the keel—or floats upon the wave.

LADY BURRELL.

ABOUT half a mile from that range of cliffs which form a part of the rude and majestic scenery of Beachy Head; and in one of those gloomy situations usually chosen by men in former times for building those mansion houses where hospitality reigned for centuries, though now mostly deserted; stood the ancient

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manor

manor house of Ruffelstown, long the family residence of the Ruffels, always respectable, though but lately ennobled.

On one side the house was shaded by a dark grove of old pine and fir, that approached almost to the windows, and rendered still more gloomy the rooms on that side, where black oak wainscot and narrow casements prevented any cheerful gleam of light. The furniture was throughout old fashioned, and almost entirely decayed by time, except in the apartment now used as a drawing room, which the present possessor had fitted up in a stile of greater lightness, though without totally departing from the massy grandeur that marked the other accomodations.

The windows of this room looked
towards

towards the extensive gardens, which though antique, and crowded with clipt yew edges, (monsters in foliage) stone, and lead, and large fish-ponds, was infinitely preferable to the aspect of a heathy down, which rose directly at the front of the house, and entirely shut out any view there might otherwise be. But towards the west, and beyond the pine grove before mentioned, where art had not interfered, the beauties of nature were seen in all their appropriate wildness, and almost made amends for the stately gloom of the mansion house.

From this place in one of those sul-
len evenings so common at the begin-
ning of November, Mrs. Davenant, and
her young friend Hortensia Sydney,
walked to the cliffs, to obtain a last

view of the frigate commanded by the husband of the former, who was that night to pass Beachy Head, on his voyage to the West Indies.

Though the evening was dark and cloudy, those on board who were interested to discover them, easily, by the help of glasses, saw the ladies standing on the rock; and as Hortensia waved her handkerchief, (which she had taken out to wipe away her tears) Lionel St. Aubin exclaimed, "Adieu! loveliest and most amiable of beings! adieu!"

Captain Davenant approached, and taking the telescope from the hand of his friend, fixed his eye on the spot where Mrs. Davenant remained leaning on the arm of Hortensia. A silent prayer for the safety of his Maria, and
a mental

a mental adieu, was followed by a deep sigh; and then desiring St. Aubin to follow him to his cabin in half an hour, he descended himself, and sat down to write a thousand kind things, and some minute instructions for the conduct of his wife; which in the sad moment of parting had been forgotten, or he had been unable to pronounce.

St. Aubin still lingered on the deck, regardless of the jests of his brother lieutenants, and a captain of marines, who ridiculed a regret they had not souls capable of feeling, and which they did not understand.

A young midshipman, about twelve years of age, whose eyes, (in spite of his endeavours to conceal his emotion)

proved that he had been weeping, said softly, as he took the hand of St. Aubin, "How good is Mrs. Davenant! How gentle, how handsome is Miss Sydney!"

"Aye my dear George," said St. Aubin, "they are indeed angels! And you like me have been sensible of the charms of their society, only to embitter the regret of leaving them."

"I have been but little their companion, sir," resumed George Wilmot. "The most of my time, till Captain Davenant last came home, has been spent at school: but in the evenings Miss Sydney used to allow me to walk with her. She often spoke to me of my guardian's intention to take me to sea; and told me, that if I copied you, I should be an honor to my family, dear
to

to my friends, and beloved by herself."

"Did she indeed, tell you so, George?"

"She did, upon my word, sir," replied the youth; "and what she said was very true: for are not you an honor to your name; dear to Captain and Mrs. Davenant, and I am sure Miss Sydney loves you."

St. Aubin felt a sensation of pleasure not to be described at this artless compliment of young Wilmot: nor was it less sweet to him, for conveying a conviction, that the gentle heart of Hortensia Sydney was interested in his welfare and happiness.

In the mean time, as the evening was almost closed in, Mrs. Davenant still leaning on Hortensia's arm, sent a last sigh,

figh, and a parting blessing after her husband, and prepared to return to her solitary dwelling.

As they walked, she spoke of his virtues, of his tenderness, with an enthusiasm, which served in some degree to lighten her grief for his departure: while it justified the tears that fell from her eyes, as she dwelt on his idea.

Hortensia was silent. She loved Captain Davenant as a brother, and mourned for his departure; but there was a sentiment of sorrow for the loss of the society of young St. Aubin, which found place in her bosom; and led her thoughts rather to him, than to the husband of her friend.

As night came on, the wind rose, and a slight shower of rain warned the ladies

ladies to hasten homwards lest they should lose their way in the obscurity that began swiftly to enwrap every object around them. They had not yet reached the path, which led from Russellstown to the cliffs (and from whence they had strayed to see the ship as long as it was possible) when they were surprised by the appearance of a man, who started from behind a rock on the left. They passed him hastily, and in silence: but he as swiftly followed; and they began to be alarmed on recollecting the lateness of the hour, and their solitary situation, half a mile from home, among the rude cliffs of Beachy Head.

They had not advanced many paces when a gust of wind carried Hortensia's hat to some distance, and the person
who

who followed flying to recover it, almost instantly presented it to her, saying in a tone of the utmost surprize to her companion,

“Is it possible that I see Mrs. Davenant?”

“Is it not Lord Ruffel who speaks?” cried she in return.

“It is, my fair friend: and I need not enquire why you are so late in this lonely place; as I conclude your employment has been similar to my own. Watching the last glimpse of the sails of the Diana, and charging every breeze with some good wishes to my noble friends, Davenant and St. Aubin.”

“I am grateful to you for them,” said Mrs. Davenant adding, “you are not
mistaken

mistaken in regard to the occupation of Hortensia, and myself."

"Have I then the honor," cried his lordship, as he took Hortensia's hand, "to salute Miss Sydney? but the darkness of the night is inauspicious to the recognition of his friends."

"To such friends as Lord Ruffel," she replied as she drew away her hand, "light and darkness are equally favourable."

His lordship bowed in silence, and they walked on for some time, without another word being spoken. The wind and rain now encreased to a violent degree; and as they had by this time reached a long avenue of beach and elm trees that led immediately to the house, the blast rush'd with such violence

lence between their trunks, and through their leafless branches, that Mrs. Davenant still weak from the consequences of her lying-in, was scarcely able to keep her feet, and at the urgent request of Lord Ruffel supported herself by taking hold of his arm; while as the path was narrow, Hortensia followed. As the wind roared, and the ocean was heard to dash furiously among the cliffs below them, Hortensia shuddered involuntarily, and in fancy beheld the Diana driven from her course upon the rocky shore of Beachy Head. But recollecting how often she had heard Captain Davenant ridicule the idea of fear, in much worse nights than this, she endeavoured to conquer her alarm: and saying

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ing only mentally, "heaven ever protect them," entered the house.

When they reached the hall, Lord Ruffel stopped them to take leave, and to request a permission (which was readily granted) to visit them on the morrow. When he had departed, the ladies both involuntarily cast their eyes round the place, as if in search of the amiable friends, who were wont to accompany them in their evening walks; and often when any of the neighbouring families visited them, to lead up the gay dance in this hall, while Mrs. Davenant played for them on her piano forte. Now it was silent, solitary and deserted; and the transient flash occasioned by a fire of branches of green fir, served only to shew the extensive gloominess of this

once festive place. The same ideas instantly struck both Mrs. Davenant and Hortensia, and they both hurried to a small parlor, which as it was never used while Captain Davenant was at home, did not so forcibly recal him and his companion to remembrance.

When they were seated in this room Mrs. Davenant said, "That Ruffel is a worthy creature."

"Yes," replied her companion, sighing at a comparison she was then making in her own mind.

"And loves you," rejoined Mrs. Davenant.

"I believe not," said Hortensia.

"I am very certain of it," resumed Mrs. Davenant, adding, "And I really think

think you wrong in treating him with such coldness as you do."

"Indeed my dear madam I cannot help it; and I entreat you to spare me at present. The season when one is sinking with regret for the loss of one's dearest friends, is not that to talk of love."

"Ah, Hortensia, I fear it is a time to *think* of it. You cannot conceal your partiality to Lionel St. Aubin; and though I cannot by any means either blame or wonder at such an attachment, I beseech you to conquer it. Believe me, a time will come, when you will wish that you had done so; and you will hopelessly struggle to free yourself from a chain which you now court.

"Happy as I find myself in the affection of my dear Davenant, I know by

fad experience, that the wife of a sailor is by no means an enviable being. The continual dangers to which men of that profession are exposed, and their frequent absences, contribute I believe to render them more tenderly beloved than most husbands are; and to make them fonder of their wives. But I do assure you, "The thorns are many, and the roses few." And as I am now in a melancholy mood, I will relate to you, some circumstances of my life, with which you are unacquainted; and which though they will not amuse, will serve to convince you that I speak from experience of the misery attending an early attachment, or an engagement rather, formed with a naval officer.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

I hail'd the spring when first it beam'd
On childhood's careless hours:
And still it came, I fondly dream'd,
With fragrance, and with flowers.

BELOE.

“YOU I suppose know that the present Lord Wilmot, uncle to little George, is my father, and that I am his only daughter. As he had formerly an elder brother, he was brought up to the sea service; and as he was passionately fond of it, he acquired distinguished rank in the navy. But on a sudden

C 3 disgust

disgust to the measures of government, he, soon after he came to his title, abandoned his profession, and retired to a house he had purchased near Weymouth. Thither my mother, brother, and myself accompanied him; and we resided for some time in perfect retirement, till on the occasion of my brother being presented to the king, on obtaining a cornetcy of dragoons; my father left home with him, and even consented to take my mother and me with them, that we might have an opportunity of going on board a first rate man of war. I was then between sixteen and seventeen, quite delighted at the party, and thought that day the happiest of my life, when I went on board the flag ship, then lying at Spithead.

“ I will

“ I will not describe to you the wonders, that every moment presented themselves to my astonished eyes; they are familiar to you, and I shall only speak of what particularly concerned myself.

“ As there were three other ladies, besides my mother in our party, and I was the person of least consequence, I was left to the care of the sixth lieutenant, to conduct me through the manifold dangers to which, (as I thought) I was exposed. In other words, Harry Davenant was commanded by his captain, to shew Miss Wilmot the lions. The surprize I expressed at every thing I saw, and the naivetè of my questions, seemed to amuse my lively conductor; but he answered me with the greatest patience; and though he could not suppress

press a smile at my childish curiosity, he explained every thing to me in the clearest manner; and at intervals we had some entertaining conversation. It happened, however, that as I was ascending one of the step ladders, from the lower deck, in which undertaking I was too solicitous to preserve my new riding dress from receiving any dirt, to allow Davenant to assist me, my foot slipped, and I fell from the top to the bottom, with such violence, that I received a severe contusion in my side, and hurt my foot considerably. Davenant followed me to the spot where I had fallen, with rather greater velocity than would have been expedient for any other animal but a cat, or a sailor, and
in

in a moment, carried me in his arms to the captain's cabin.

“ I had not lost my senses, and was fully sensible of the gallant attentions of Davenant ; which were so conspicuous, and so much approved by Captain Dormer, that he invited him to dinner with our party, who were not to go on shore till the evening.

“ Before we had quite dined, I found my side so very painful, that it nearly overcame my fortitude ; and I desired to retire into the stern gallery ; insisting that no person should follow me. I with difficulty got leave to go alone, and sat down on a chair, that Davenant brought out of the cabin. He still lingered in the gallery ; and on my requesting he would join the company, said “ he
was

was sorry I thought him intrusive," and left me, to the indulgence of tears, that lowness of spirits occasioned by exerting myself (while in violent pain) to be cheerful, drew from my eyes. I was still weeping, when the whole party came suddenly into the gallery, to observe the effect of the salute usually fired by all the ships on the return of his majesty from a day's cruizing in the frigate. Ashamed of being discovered in tears, I started from my seat, and joined the party, leaning over the rail of the gallery, and pretending to be very intent on watching the firing.

" I had unconsciously leaned out so far, that I have no doubt I was in danger of falling into the sea: but I felt some one lay hold on my cloaths, and
Davenant's

Davenant's voice softly said, "Miss Wilmot is certainly not aware that her situation is far from safe." I turned hastily round in order to thank my attentive monitor, and as I did so, observed a lurking smile on his countenance, which I had no doubt proceeded from his perceiving that my eyes were red and swelled. This idea mortified me so much that I could not refrain from tears; and Davenant expressed the kindest solicitude about my indisposition. Finding, however, that I still continued to weep, he flew from me, and directly returned with the surgeon of the ship, whom he entreated I would permit to prescribe something for my foot, of which I chiefly complained. Of this, however, I would not hear, and my indefatigable

defatigable Harry, applied to my mother, (who being placed at the farther end of the gallery, did not perceive what was going forward) for her assistance to prevail on me to allow the surgeon to examine my hurt. I now declared that I was quite well, and the surgeon with a smile, but without contradicting me, brought me a little hartshorn and water, which soon recovered me from the agitation of my spirits.

“ When we were to go on shore, Davenant contrived to be in the boat, which was to attend us to land; and I heard him say to the man who steered us, that he should not return to the ship till the morning.

“ My father also heard him, and said that since he did not intend to go on board

board that night, he must not refuse to sup with us at the inn. When we reached the shore, as it was very late, it was impossible to wait in the boat till a conveyance was brought to take me to the town, so that I was obliged to walk, or rather Davenant almost carried me thither.

“ We had not been many minutes in a dining room till I fainted, and my mother had me conveyed into the next room which was that where I was to sleep. When I recovered, I wished very much to have joined the company, but was not permitted.

“ My mother afterwards told me, that on account of my indisposition Davenant wished to retract his promise of supping with them ; but that as my fa-

ther would not allow of it, he had taken his leave at an early hour, after having obtained permission to call, to enquire how I was, before he returned to the ship.

“ This visit was productive of many others; and at length Lord Wilmot became so fond of him, that when my health (for the contusion in my side had brought on an illness that obliged us to go into lodgings at Weymouth) would allow of our returning home, he invited him to accompany us: and as he procured leave of absence from his ship, for some weeks, he readily consented.

This visit was ominous to me. Davenant was then, just what you have since known him: lively, elegant, and insinuating: the favorite of nature, though

though the outcast of fortune. In short I loved him, and was infinitely too artless, when he declared a passion for me to conceal my feelings. We both well knew, that my father would never consent to our marriage; and Davenant pressed me to consent to a clandestine union. I in vain represented to him, that our ruin would be the consequence of our taking such a step. Sailors have no idea of prudence themselves, nor will they listen to her dictates from another, and Harry accused me of coldness, and interested views. He was not long a lieutenant; and he fancied that the provision he had acquired by his pay, was amply competent to the subsistence of a wife and family. I foolishly believed it; and consented to a marriage, that

rendered me an outcast from all my family.

“ As is the case in most matches of this kind, it was sometime before I discovered the evils attending the lot I had drawn. Immediately on my marriage I had left my father’s house ; for notwithstanding all my entreaties, my husband would not consent to concealing our union a moment after it was formed.

“ The first thing that awoke me to a sense of my imprudence, was, my husband receiving orders to join his ship a few weeks before I was to lye in ; and it was with the greatest difficulty, and representing to him, that our whole support depended on his exertions, that I prevailed on him to obey the mandate and leave me. Eleven months after my marriage,

marriage, I was brought to bed of a son, and during a long illness that followed its birth, I should have experienced all the bitterness of poverty, had it not been for a present of fifty pounds, that my brother, then a captain of dragoons, saved out of his own income to bestow secretly on me.

“ It were endless to describe to you the various distress I endured during four years, in which time I had four children; and during which Davenant was never at home for three weeks together. Soon after the birth of my fourth child, Harry was promoted to the rank of master and commander, and to the command of a ship; and our situation was now much better than it had been. I had before this, frequently ap-

plied to my father for pardon, and restoration to his favor : but he was inexorable to me ; and my generous brother was now incapacitated from serving us, as he had displeased Lord Wilmot, but still more my mother, by marrying a most lovely young woman (whom he had been long attached to) at the very time when by a sudden turn in the affairs of her father, who was a merchant, she was deprived of the prospect of an immense fortune, and reduced to beggary. What he *could* do, however he did, for he took the charge of my eldest boy, till Davenant should be able to provide for him ; and in less than a year, my three other children were taken from me.

“ I have ceased to regret them, my
dear

dear Hortensia : for tenderly as I loved the sweet infants, I could not murmur at the will of God to remove them from a world were they could look forward only to poverty and distress.

“ When I was thus relieved from the care of my children, Davenant proposed that I should make one voyage with him; which could not be very disagreeable, as I was never sick at sea : to own the truth, he found that it would not be in his power to leave me a sufficient sum of money for my subsistence during two years absence. I accordingly went with him to Halifax, where we staid three months ; during which time, I enjoyed greater happiness and comfort than I had done for five years : and then, after a tedious cruize, we returned to England.

land. During the voyage from America, I first saw and regarded Lionel St. Aubin. He was then a midshipman, and expected to be made a lieutenant immediately on his return to Europe.

“Davenant soon became so attached to him, that he engaged him, if through their mutual interest it could be effected, to be his lieutenant, in case he was himself promoted; which happened soon afterwards, and their arrangements took effect.

“On this occasion Lord Ruffel introduced himself to Davenant, (his lordship is you know one of the Lords of the Admiralty) and on a nearer acquaintance he requested that we would honor him by making use of this house as a residence; and the proposal was
made

made in so friendly a manner that we consented to accept his offer.

“ We were just settled here, when you came to live with me, and little George was left by my uncle to our care.”

Mrs. Davenant ceased ; and as she did so, sighed at the recollection of her misfortunes. Hortensia’s gentle heart, also heaved a sigh for the hapless lot of her friend, and perhaps anticipated the similar sufferings her destiny was preparing for her. “ But no,” said she mentally, “ never will I consent by any one act of my own, to draw on myself a fate so severe.”

Mrs. Davenant after a silence of a few moments resumed.

“ Davenant is now gone to the West-Indies,

Indies, and God knows when we shall meet; but with your society, my little Eliza, the certainty that my son is well, and a decent competence for us all, I hope I shall be happy. I think no possible calamity can now be new to me, and cannot therefore be heavy. There is no misery I have not endured, but unkindness from my husband, or insult from the licentious; and from both, I now, I hope, am secure. My Harry's affection has outlived misfortune; and if I have been unnoticed by the gay libertine, till twenty-seven, I shall scarcely have my repose disturbed. Could I see you once happily settled with Lord Ruffel, whom I consider as one of the most amiable of men, I could be perfectly contented with my destiny."

"I hope

“ I hope the event of my marrying Lord Ruffel,” said Hortensia gravely, “ is not necessary to your happiness, for I have good reason to believe it is an event that will never take place.”

“ You have no reason for such a supposition,” replied Mrs. Davenant, “ more than I have for a directly contrary one. I am certain that Ruffel loves you ; and were you my sister by nature, as well as affection, I should think it my duty to advise you not to check his hopes of your favor.”

“ If I were your sister,” said Hortensia, “ I should probably act otherwise than I now do. Were I the honorable Miss Wilmot, I should not be thought a fair object for the exercise of unmeaning gallantry. But as Hortensia Sydney !
without

without rank, fortune, or connexions, my situation is different; and so ought my behaviour. If I listened to the flattering tales of Lord Ruffel, and should be deceived, what would the world say, if the blasted peace of so insignificant a being, became a subject of animadversion? Would it not my dear Mrs. Davenant, be very apt to say, She merits her fate? Why was she so vain and sanguine as to conceive, that Lord Ruffel, the nephew of a duke, would entertain serious thoughts of a union with her? Her presumption in aspiring to his hand, deserved the punishment her present mortification inflicts. Ah Maria! You know not what you say, when you counsel me to encourage, perhaps a transient liking in Lord Ruffel."

"But,"

"But," resumed Mrs. Davenant, "tell me,—had you never seen St. Aubin, would these wife arguments have had such importance?"

"I hope they would. If you examine them without prejudice, you will find them perfectly rational, abstracted from present situation; and not merely the whims of a romantic girl, who wishes to gloss over her obstinacy in opposing what her friends think for her advantage; by plausible sophistry, which is generally as weak, as it always is mean."

Mrs. Davenant shook her head in silence; she could not confute what Hortensia had said, though she thought she was in an error. She was herself assured of the merit and sincerity of Lord Russel, but was conscious that she had

no positive authority for it, whereby to convince another. But she had suffered too much from her own imprudent marriage, not to wish to save Hortensia from striking on the rock, on which her peace had been shipwrecked: and she knew no means so likely to detach her mind from so destructive a partiality as her's for St. Aubin, as interesting her in the favor of Lord Ruffel; of whom Mrs. Davenant had the highest opinion, and who was certainly one of the finest young men in England in point of person and accomplishments; and possessed not only of a title, but a splendid fortune. But the advantages that such an alliance promised were as nothing in the balance with Hortensia, when she compared

compared the modest merit, the genius, and education of St. Aubin, with the brilliant, but less endearing qualities of his Lordship.

CHAP. III.

WHEN Hortensia retired to her room, she went almost mechanically to the window, and unclosed it. It was one of those old fashioned casements, that were common in those times when shutters were thought a very unnecessary appendage to a window, as it was not a customary thing to wish to exclude the day-light from a bedchamber, as at the earliest dawn every sleeper wished to awake to rise.

The

The hail storm had been too violent to last long, and all was now tranquil and serene; the element seemed to repose in mild stillness, and the declining moon beamed clearly on every object of the landscape. Hortensia's window commanded a view of a part of the back of Beachy Head, with a small bay, which had in times when Ruffelstown was in its grandeur, sheltered a pleasure yacht belonging to the family. Across the lawn, and leading directly to the wharf where the boat used to be moored, was a long avenue of ash and chestnut trees, intermingled with a few limes. On this avenue the moon now shone, casting long and broad shadows formed by their wide spreading branches, and admitting the clear light between their trunks.

Hortensia was for a minute engaged to admire the regularity of the distance at which the trees were planted; but was not a little surprized at beholding one of the long strait stalks, move from its place.

Such did the case really appear; but Hortensia as soon as she observed it, was convinced that this odd appearance proceeded from a human figure, that was walking under the shade of the trees. It came gradually nearer, and at length stepped boldly into the lawn. It was habited in white, and from the length of its garments, (which Hortensia distinctly heard rustling upon the withered grass) with the slender form of the person, she was led to conceive it to be a female; but the hat that it wore, and the length
of

of its strides, as it moved hastily across the lawn towards the grove that was at the end of the house, proclaimed that it could not be a woman.

Hortensia then recollected having heard her father speak of the long white cloaks worn by the gentlemen in Germany, and concluded the stranger was wrapped in one of these.

While Hortensia was still unable to imagine who this person could be, or the motive of this nightly perambulation, the figure again returned, but more slowly passed the lawn, closer to the house too, than he had done before; and again entering the avenue that led to the sea, he was soon lost in distance.

Many conjectures might reasonably be formed as to the appearance of this
stranger

stranger; such, as his being a clandestine visitor of some of the servants, on the watch either for them to come to him, or give him the signal of admittance to the house: a smuggler, come to see if the coast was clear, and the inhabitants of Russellstown retired to rest, before he brought his contraband commodities across the lawn; with many other probable conjectures; but it was not less natural for the young, (and perhaps romantic) Hortensia Sydney to imagine, that this person must be a *prince in disguise*.

Determined to watch him to the last moment, and if possible to have a more accurate view of him, she stole silently out of her chamber, and into that next to it, where George Wilmot had been accustomed to sleep; and where amongst
a number

a number of nautical curiosities ranged upon the wall over the chimney was a ship glass, calculated for seeing objects at night. She took this down, and returning with it to the casement found that in two minutes later, she would have obtained no satisfaction.

She (with the help of the glass) distinctly saw a small boat, resembling one of the Norway skiffs, with two persons in it crossing the bay. One of them she had no doubt was the stranger, as his white cloak yet hung over one shoulder: but she was now certain he was no prince—he managed one of the oars with great seeming dexterity and ease; and as Hortensia had been only accustomed to the parade of a man of war's barge, where an officer will not even
take

take charge of the helm, she decided in her own mind, that this could not be a person in any of the superior ranks of life.

She therefore quickly went to bed, determined to watch whether he returned the next night ; which however he did not.

Hortensia Sydney was the daughter of an officer, whose passion for play, had put it out of his power, to make any provision for his two sons and Hortensia, except a small annuity which the latter was to enjoy during her life.

Charles Sydney entered early into the navy in Sweden ; and his younger brother engaged in the service of the East India Company.

He, and the brother of Captain Davenant

venant, were mates in the same ship; and an intimacy thence was formed between them, which led to the former lamenting to his friend, the unprotected state in which his beloved sister was left by the death of her father.

William Davenant, young, generous, and ardent, became immediately interested in the fate of this young creature, and insisted on Edward Sydney introducing him to Hortensia.

She was of that order of beings, which cannot be beheld without pleasure, or left without regret; and Davenant started a proposal of applying to the amiable wife of his brother, to procure her protection for the fair orphan Sydney.

Ever benevolent and good, Mrs. Davenant immediately consented to her residing

siding with her, and she was escorted to Ruffelstown by her brother, and his young friend, who both remained there for three weeks.

It was at Ruffelstown that Hortensia first saw St. Aubin, and was introduced to Lord Ruffel.

The latter interested her but little, while the former every hour rendered more agreeable to her. He was little more than two years older than herself, and their taste, their genius, and tempers were so much alike, that it naturally produced a sort of companionship, which (as is common) ended in a mutual attachment. Hortensia was so much pleased with Captain and Mrs. Davenant, and their society, that the time flew swiftly till the day arrived that Sydney, and
William

William Davenant were to depart, to join their ship. When they were taking leave, the latter seemed particularly affected when he bade adieu to Hortensia. He had taken her hand, and on her reiterating her thanks for his kindness to her, in procuring her an asylum with his sister in law, he said, "If you think that what I have done merits your gratitude, promise that you will not forget me."

"Never!" cried she, with enthusiasm.

"And," Davenant resumed, in a lower voice, "when persevering love shall prompt you to reward it with this dear hand, think on the absent Davenant, and remember he adores you."

As he said this, he quitted her hand, and flew out of the house, followed by

Sydney, and his brother; which last was to accompany the two young men to London.

Hortensia remained in painful, and motionless astonishment; for so carefully had Davenant concealed his partiality to her, that so far from suspecting it existed, this declaration, (for such it appeared) was like a thunder-clap to her.

Softened as her mind was by sorrow for the departure of her beloved brother, it was more susceptible of tenderness towards his friend, and she sighed deeply as she uttered, "Poor Davenant!"

Another sigh which seemed the echo of her own, made her raise her eyes, and she beheld St. Aubin, who must have heard her tender ejaculation. The
idea

idea that he had, caused her cheeks to glow with crimson; and her colour increased when he said, "Why does Miss Sydney blush at betraying an attachment so laudable?"

"Do you then suspect me of blushing for my affection to my brother, Mr. St. Aubin?" said Hortensia.

"Or to William Davenant?" resumed St. Aubin with a half smile, and in a hesitating manner.

"He has done me fraternal kindness first; and therefore claims all my gratitude and affection."

"All madam!—And have you not any favor to bestow on another?" returned St. Aubin dejectedly.

"When any other does for me what he has done."

“ Oh, why have not I also a sister !” exclaimed St. Aubin interrupting her.

“ I will not affect to misunderstand you,” said Hortensia, “ and I may assure you that your own merits are sufficient to ensure my friendship and esteem.”

“ But your *love* you reserve for Davenant !”

“ I do not reserve it for any one !”

“ You have then given it ?” rejoined St. Aubin.

Hortensia knew not what to say : she could not bear the idea of leaving him in an error ; but to contradict him, might lead to her betraying more than she wished.

“ How came we to talk of love ?” cried she, attempting to appear gay.

“ Because hypocrisy is hateful to an
ingenuous

ingenuous mind, and out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh," replied St. Aubin.

"I bar quoting scripture," cried Mrs. Davenant; who overheard the last sentence.

"And I, nonsense!" added Hortensia recovering herself a little, and advancing towards Mrs. Davenant.

St. Aubin left the room.

It was near a fortnight before St. Aubin found an opportunity to explain his sentiments to Hortensia, and to request, (what was the utmost of his desire) a promise from her, that at a future time, and if he continued agreeable to her, she would allow him to hope for her hand. Hortensia though she was too nobly sincere to conceal the pleasure, the know-

ledge of his attachment gave her, yet positively refused to enter into any engagement that should bind either of them; and St. Aubin was obliged to be content with the certainty that he was tenderly beloved by the object of his attachment.

CHAP. IV.

His honest soul was an unfolded book
For all men to peruse:—

LADY BURRELL.

ON the very day when this explanation took place, Captain Davenant arrived from London, after having seen his brother sail for the East Indies, and brought Hortensia the following letter:

‘ Excuse me, dear Hortensia, that
‘ in the melancholy moment of fare-
‘ well I so far forgot myself as to be-
‘ tray a secret I intended to have kept,
till

‘ till fortune put it in my power to
‘ derive some advantage from the ac-
‘ knowledgment of an affection I
‘ hoped by that time, and by constant
‘ attention and kindness to have cre-
‘ ated in your heart. But my own
‘ felt too severely at parting with you
‘ to be under the guidance of my rea-
‘ son, and I have only to entreat your
‘ forgiveness for the abruptness of my
‘ declaration, and your permission to
‘ continue to love you, in the hope
‘ that you may one day be mine. But
‘ no Hortensia, I will not ask for your
‘ permission; I will even defer sending
‘ this letter till I am on my voyage,
‘ that while that lasts I may enjoy the
‘ delight of saying to myself, “It is
‘ for Hortensia that I labor, and en-
‘ counter

‘ counter danger,” and well I know I
‘ shall never weary in my duty. I do
‘ not however design to bind you by
‘ any engagements, though inclination
‘ prompts me to hold myself as
‘ united to you by every tie of honor
‘ and fidelity. I desire only of you
‘ that you will sometimes think of me
‘ while I am away, assured that if some
‘ worthier lover makes an impression
‘ on your heart, and you feel inclined
‘ to bestow your hand, none of your
‘ friends will feel more pleasure at
‘ hearing that you are happy, (though
‘ it destroys his own hopes) than
‘ your

‘ W. DAVENANT.’

However flattered Hortensia must
necessarily be at this letter, it yet gave
her

her extreme pain ; which was the keener for the knowledge that it was impossible to inform Davenant of the state of her heart till many months past ; and in the mean time he was flattering himself with hopes that were never to be realized. She determined however, to shew the letter to Captain Davenant, to inform him of what her sentiments were concerning its contents. She was however deterred from her purpose, when she recollected that such a proceeding must probably lead to a declaration of her situation in regard to St. Aubin : but she soon resolved even to run the hazard of that, rather than not render justice to Davenant.

Accordingly, the next time she found herself alone with Captain Davenant, she

He put his brother's letter into his hand, and waited in silence till he had perused it. When he had done so, he said, "I perceive that my conjectures were right, and that William loves my amiable Hortensia."

"That it is so, sir, is at once my pride and my sorrow: I feel myself gratified at being thought worthy of a heart like his, while I lament that it is not in my power to accept of it, or give him mine in exchange," said Hortensia.

"My dear Miss Sydney!" returned Captain Davenant, "this is a subject on which I do not think myself authorized to speak; there are so many contending interests in my mind that I should fear any advice I might give you would be prompted by a view to some one of them.

I shall

I shall therefore only say, that to be loved by William cannot do dishonor to any woman, be her rank and merits what they may. I know him well; I am confident that his head and heart are worthy of each other, and of every good this world can bestow. He is young, but his understanding is mature; and though he may sometimes give way to the thoughtless gaiety of a sailor, his conduct has never yet been stained with the unprincipled levity of fashionable men. Truth obliges me to say thus much; and feeling obliges me to tell you, that next to my Maria, you are the woman whom I esteem the most.

As Captain Davenant said this, he was going out of the room, but Hortensia caught hold of his hand, saying, "tell me,

me, I conjure you, my dear sir, how can I inform Mr. Davenant of——” she stopped abruptly, and then added, “I am fully sensible of the justice of what you say, and were it not——could Mr. Davenant be content——was I not conscious——” she again stopped, blushed, and again attempting to speak, hesitated and was silent.

Captain Davenant said mildly, “were you not conscious that St. Aubin is dearer than William.”

“Oh heaven!” exclaimed Hortensia, “how I have betrayed, and held myself up to scorn and ridicule!”

“Not to scorn, my dear Miss Sydney,” returned Davenant in a soothing voice; “you have only betrayed to a friend warmly interested in your welfare,

what does honor to your heart and judgment. And were William capable of resenting your indifference to him, I should look on him as unworthy of my affection."

Though covered with the deepest blushes, and trembling so, as she could scarcely support herself, Hortensia felt some comfort from the certainty that this cruel explanation was over; and she tottered up to her own room, to weep in solitude over the gloomy prospects that opened around her. She did not recover her spirits for the whole of the day, and in the evening, they suffered still greater depression from an order that arrived from the Admiralty for Captain Davenant and Lieutenant St. Aubin to repair immediately to Portsmouth.

mouth, from whence they were to sail in ten days, for the West Indies; and it was on this voyage that Mrs. Davenant and Hortensia had watched the Diana, passing Beachy Head.

Lord Ruffel did not fail to pay his promised visit. His behaviour was as usual, tenderly respectful to both the ladies, and almost gallant to Hortensia; who received his attentions with the utmost sweetness, but with a coldness that would have chilled any lover. After sitting with them about an hour, his lordship proposed a walk on the cliffs: as he was sufficiently master of human nature to know, that the season was not yet arrived, when the indulgence of sorrow must be checked, lest it degenerate into hopeless apathy.

Mrs. Davenant, who had passed a sleepless night, was languid and feeble, and gladly accepted the offer of leaning on Lord Ruffel's arm. Hortensia was then at liberty, and strayed into another path, lower than that in which her friends were, but still within sight of them. She cast her eye over the boundless tract of ocean, that rolled below the steep cliff on which she paused to contemplate it; and as the autumnal breezes sighed low and melancholy among the rocks on which the surges beat, her mind was fitted for the reception of those melancholy images that crowded to her thoughts; nor did she once recollect the companions of her walk, till Lord Ruffel advancing, exclaimed, "Heavens! Miss Sydney, are you listening to the roaring of the sea?"

Mrs.

Mrs. Davenant, madam, wonders at your stay, and has sent me (while she rests herself after the fatigue of ascending the hill) to bring you up to her."

Hortensia now found that she had unconsciously been advancing nearer to the brow of the cliff, while Mrs. Davenant had been going a contrary way, and she now hastened to rejoin her.

"Your fair friend," said Lord Ruffel, as they walked, "indulges too deep a regret for the absence of Davenant; and it in some degree tarnishes the lustre of that perfect beauty she possesses."

"Can your Lordship," returned Hortensia, "who are a man of taste and sensibility, think that the sorrow of a wife for her separation from a truly valuable

G 3 husband,

husband, can render her less an object of esteem and admiration?"

"No, Miss Sydney! I think the tears that seem every moment ready to start from her lovely eyes, give them additional brilliancy, and render her a thousand times more fascinating than ever. And I lament that her affections have been bestowed on the insensible being, who, possessed of Maria Wilmot, could tear himself from her presence."

"But Maria Davenant," said Hortensia, smiling.

"Call her not by that name, Miss Sydney," cried his lordship with vehemence. "Davenant is unworthy of her!"

"Certainly my lord, not less deserving of her, for the fortitude with which he encounters every danger of a pestilential

lential climate, for her sake : and the generous reliance he places in the steadiness and purity of her conduct, when he leaves her to her own guardianship, where vice and malice are always at hand, to pray on virtue ; and it requires the greatest circumspection to discover among the flowers of disinterested friendship, and fraternal regard, the serpent that would entwine itself around her artless bosom, and sting her to death."

Hortensia spoke with an animation and feeling, that gave a force to the words almost inconceivable ; and his lordship made no answer as they just then rejoined Mrs. Davenant.

"Come my dear Maria," said Hortensia, "it is not good for you to sit
thus,

thus. Will you lean on me as we walk homewards?"

Mrs. Davenant rose, and arm in arm, they descended the hill: Lord Ruffel addressed himself indifferently to each on the customary subjects of chit-chat conversation, till they came within sight of the house, when he bade them good morning and left them.

CHAP. V.

—————I do not think
So fair an outward, and such stuff within
Endows a man but him—————

CYMBELINE.

FOR some weeks this friendly intercourse continued. Almost every day Lord Ruffel called on the ladies, to accompany them in their walks, which he contrived should as seldom as possible be directed to the cliffs. As Mrs. Davenant continued rather weak and languid, and not able to walk much, Lord Ruffel

Ruffel used to contrive to let her enjoy the exercise of a carriage, by frequently sending, or bringing a little niece of his (who was at school near Ruffelstown) in his elegant post coach, to request Mrs. Davenant and Hortensia would indulge her, by accompanying her in an airing ; as her uncle never allowed her to go alone. The infant Eliza Davenant was always of these parties ; and they proved extremely salutary both to her and her mother.

Hortensia was never forgetful of her design to watch the nocturnal visitor of the lawn of Ruffelstown ; and she uniformly observed that he used to come for three, or sometimes more nights together, and then remain absent for a fortnight, when he would renew his perambulations.

rambulations. From this circumstance, which proved his motions to depend upon the tide, Hortensia at length concluded in her own mind that he was a smuggler: but as, whenever the night was fair, (at which times only he came) she saw him depart with his companion in the skiff, before twelve o'clock, she thought that he had certainly no designs on the house, and was therefore silent about him in the family, as she knew that his constant visits would alarm Mrs. Davenant, who was now, by the absence of the captain deprived of her man servant, who always attended his master. To Lord Ruffel indeed, she might have spoken; but as no danger seemed probable to accrue from the inoffensive intrusions of the stranger, she could not
(to

(to satisfy her curiosity, for in fact it was nothing more) overcome her reluctance, to consult him on any subject.

Thus slowly passed the months of November and December.

The manners of Lord Ruffel were engaging in the highest degree; and his attentions to Hortensia, “Not pointed enough to alarm,” though Mrs. Davenant thought them by no means, “vague enough to be misunderstood.” That lady encouraged his intimacy with them, in the hope that Hortensia would not long remain insensible to his assiduous tenderness; and that he would teach her to forget a passion so inimical to her repose, as an attachment to a sailor, ungifted by fortune. She expected every day to be the one, when Lord Ruffel
would

would declare himself to her amiable young friend : but whenever she spoke to Hortensia on that subject, the latter always said she was certain his lordship had no intentions of that nature.

One day that it rained extremely heavy, so as to prevent all possibility of walking, Lord Ruffel happened to be with the two ladies, and as he had often before done, took up a book, and read to them for some time : but after a while, he laid aside the author that had amused them, and they fell into a conversation which Mrs. Davenant artfully turned to the subject of the irresolution of a man who loves, about declaring his passion to his mistress.

“What is your opinion, Miss Sydney?” enquired Lord Ruffel, “do you think

the man to blame, for that trembling diffidence which prevents his offering his heart where he thinks it will be rejected?"

"Circumstances often vary, my lord," she replied coldly, and without raising her eyes from the work on which she was intent.

"But where Miss Sydney, the object is all lovely, all amiable," continued his lordship, "and his attachment may from prejudice, prove offensive, can you then censure the timid adorer?"

"I can, and do, my lord. Prejudice can never render an honor offensive, and such is the offer of the hand of a person of worth. But where a person is conscious that his love *ought* to be contemned, he naturally fears that it will; and I suppose, as naturally considers in
the

the light of prejudice, every moral duty, every principle of honor, that would oppose his success."

"Your severity has hurried you beyond the point in question, Hortensia," said Mrs. Davenant; "a dishonorable passion was not thought of."

"If Lord Ruffel," returned Hortensia, "thinks that I have gone beyond bounds, he will never again ask for an opinion which I assure him shall always be given with the same sincerity, and the same view to what is *meant*, as well as what is *said*."

Mrs. Davenant gave Hortensia a look which expressed displeasure, and the smile that shewed itself on the countenance of Lord Ruffel, was of dubious

origin. Soon after this he took his leave.

Mrs. Davenant remained silent for some time after he left the room, and at last, Hortensia took her hand, saying, "You are displeased with me."

"I am indeed," she answered.

"You should not be so, then, my dear Mrs. Davenant, if, (as I believe) it arises from my expressions to Lord Ruffel, you do me wrong: I did not mean to offend, but only to shew him that I am not to be imposed on, by specious, but unmeaning gallantry."

"You are unjust, Hortensia. Lord Ruffel is above disguise, and cannot even conceal the pain your behaviour gives him."

"I am not sorry for it," said Hortensia

fia as she rose, and went out of the room, "it will teach him precaution, if not propriety."

The ladies did not meet again till dinner time, and then, the conversation of the morning was not renewed.

During all this time, Mrs. Davenant heard not from her husband: St. Aubin, though permitted by Hortensia to write to her, failed to do so; George Wilmot too was silent, and Mrs. Davenant became uneasy on their account. Hortensia though she suffered nearly as much as her friend from suspense, and anxiety, yet endeavoured to cheer her, only in private giving indulgence to the feelings that dictated the following Sonnet to suspense.

H 3

WHAT

WHAT art thou, spectre of unquiet mein !
That thus delights the wounded mind to move,
With all the sad varieties of pain,
From hope arising, fear, despair, and love ?

Bane of repose ! Suspence ! I know the now !
Thy air impatient, and thy restless eye !
The varying color on thy cheek I know ;
Thy smile unconscious, and the rising sigh,

That swells thy bosom with a nameless woe ;
When the sunk heart is weary with its care,
Yet not a tear to ease its pain will flow.
Ah ! hence, Suspence ! dire sister of Despair !
Fly hence to others !—No ! with me remain !
Too oft I've felt,—to wish to them thy pain !

With regret Hortensia beheld her friend grow pale and thin, and her spirits sink daily. Her perfect beauty was impaired by illness ; her eyes were no longer brilliant, or her looks animated by gaiety. The change in Hortensia herself, though great, was not so striking,

ing, as she never possessed the same share of personal charms that Mrs. Davenant did. But when the month of January passed away, without their having heard even that the *Diana* had been met with on her voyage, the inquietude of Hortensia became so excessive, that she could no longer comfort her drooping friend, whose only pleasure was now, to listen to the soothing promises and suggestions of Lord Ruffel. Hortensia almost admired him for the unvarying kindness, and delicacy of his conduct.

CHAP. VI.

Where now are all my flattering dreams of joy?

——— give my soul her wonted rest:

Since first thy beauty fix'd my roving eyes,

Heart knawing cares corrode my penive breast.

Let happy lovers fly where pleasure calls,

With festive songs, beguile the fleeting hour.

SMOLLET.

EARLY in February, his lordship was obliged to go to London on business of importance, and accordingly took his leave of his fair friends, intending to see them again very soon.

During his absence, Hortensia indulged herself without scruple in her passion

sion for wandering among the cliffs of an evening; and particularly when the wind was high, watching the surf of the sea, while her cloaths were often wet with the spray. Here she thought without interruption of her lover, and her brothers: and when she saw the ocean in a perturbed state, she would shudder at the recollection that the two Sydneys, the two Davenants (who were scarcely less beloved than her real brothers,) George Wilmot, and St. Aubin, were all at the mercy of that capricious element. She sighed for them all, but there was a passionate tenderness in her fears for the latter above all the rest, and it filled her eyes with tears, as often as her thoughts pointed that way.

One

One night she wandered later than usual in her favorite walk, engaged in watching a ship that was going out to sea. The moon had risen above an hour; but her light was often obscured by the dark clouds, that returning gusts of wind blew athwart the sky. The sea looked black and gloomy, except where the white foam rolled over the scarcely covered rocks, or a faint moonbeam penetrated the shade of approaching night; and the ship was only distinguished by being of a darker hue than the surrounding waves. At one time she seemed ready to strike on the coast; at another, the gleam of light shewed her at a distance rolling among the billows. The scene was singularly wild, and almost terrific. The sea became
every

every moment more violently agitated, and the darkness encreased so much, that now, only in the partial moonlight, could Hortensia distinguish the headlands on which the sea broke incessantly; the pale yellow hue of the moon on the waters, and the dark vapour that every moment clouded her brilliancy.

Hortensia sighed deeply; and almost at the same moment she heard a quick footstep, and Lord Ruffel's voice pronounced her name in a tone of surprize.

“Your pleasures are strangely melancholy, Miss Sydney,” added his Lordship; “but I ought not to chide you for indulging them, since in that I resemble you. I come, like you, to linger on a spot where I first took leave of a beloved object: like you, I delight in watching
the

the tempestuous sea, though I hope not to behold the dear possessor of my heart, or even the bark, that, in a moment of undescrivable anguish, waisted her from me."

Hortensia was not a little surprized at hearing words like these delivered with all the energy of feeling, by Lord Ruffel, whose views she had imagined to be so very contradictory to a tender and delicate sentiment like this: she was much affected by it, and suffered him to put her arm within his. As they walked homewards, he resumed, "You, Miss Sydney, whose gentle nature is so susceptible of tender emotions, will, alike from goodness and from sympathy, know how to pity my misery: doom'd to adore a woman, far removed from my
hopes,

hopes, and indifferent to me, it is only in your amiable society that I can taste enjoyment, even in the small degree I now ever can. But you sigh, charming Hortensia; I am to blame in engaging your thoughts on my sad destiny, when the noble absent St. Aubin claims all your tenderest remembrance. Ah! Miss Sydney, if you would permit me to be your friend, what is there I would not do to serve you? Give me but your sanction for my exertions! Give me but the sweet promise that it will conduce to your felicity, and I will strain every nerve to procure promotion for the man whom you love, to enable him to pretend to a hand so fair."

"If you mean," said Hortensia, "that you would serve Mr. St. Aubin for my

fake, why will you not do it for his own? But if it is necessary to procure your powerful interest for him, that I should say it would make me happy, I may safely assure you, that the prosperity of a friend of Captain and Mr. Davenant, will give me sincere pleasure."

"Lovely, candid Miss Sydney!" exclaimed Lord Ruffel, "I will for your fake be a friend to St. Aubin."

Lord Ruffel paused, and as they proceeded, he sometime afterwards resumed,

"The time has passed tediously, and yet I think it is but yesterday, when disappointed hope, and fruitless anguish, caused my first melancholy visit to those cliffs. When, in a night even worse than this, I stood on the raggy summit
of

of the rock we have left, and gazed on the vessel which contained my heart's treasure, as she labour'd in the gale, and her tall masts seem'd to bow to meet the foaming billows; you cannot conceive the agonizing impatience I felt during every interval of darkness, till the moon again shone forth to convince me, that the ship had met with no disaster.

“ When you watched the lessening bark of St. Aubin, you knew, that were he destined to find a grave in that element by which he hoped to gain a competence, his last thought would present your image—his parting sigh would be for you ! But I had not that sad consolation : I know that she thought not of me ; of my anguish !—my despair. She

knew not even that I adored her ; and my rival (whose merit I could not deny) was her fondly beloved companion. All the soft tenderness of her soul was absorbed in her attachment to him, and Ruffel was forgotten ; or only remembered as one of the gay swarm that fluttered round her beauty in its dawn."

Hortensia was affected : as he described his past sufferings, they seemed to be renewed with added keenness, and as they just then reached the house of Ruffelstown, Hortensia said soothingly, " Come, my dear lord, you shall enter with me : the conversation of Mrs. Davenant will banish this romantic melancholy."

" Alas ! it cannot," cried he, adding,

" Adieu,

“ Adieu, my friend, I cannot now attend you.”

“ Why not ?” said Hortensia, extending her hand to detain him : “ in repeating your friendly efforts to sooth her dejection, you will lose your own.”

“ No,” replied he scarcely audibly, and kissing her hand which he had taken : I cannot go now. If you do not mean that I should forfeit my own esteem for ever, do not ask me to attend you.”

“ Go then, my lord,” said Hortensia ; “ I lament your sorrows, but I condemn your indulgence of them. You should endeavour to forget their source, and not by suffering your thoughts to dwell on it, endanger not only your peace, but your honor. Farewell !

Reflect on my counsel, which is given with the sincerity of a friend interested in your welfare, and zealous that virtues like yours should escape contamination from one unworthy prosperity."

As she pronounced these words, Mrs. Davenant came out of the parlor, and Lord Ruffel perceiving her, instantly vanished.

Mrs. Davenant approached the hall door, where Hortensia yet stood, and looking out on the dark and tempestuous night, said, "How frightful is this storm! Oh God! perhaps poor Davenant is its victim."

"Do not give way to such fears, my dear madam," returned Hortensia; "the evening is not so bad as (from the roaring of the sea) you may imagine it.

it. I am just come in from a walk, and I assure you that the elements have been much more agitated, when Captain Davenant has ridiculed me for supposing a ship could be in any danger."

"Ah, Hortensia, I know Harry's tendernefs for me, too well to believe it. His kind foresight always represented it to him that the weather would make me very uneasy in his absence; and he never would own, if possible, that the stormy sea could be dangerous. But it seems to me that I never heard a tempest like this!"

"So true it is Maria, that present evils always appear the severest. However, I give you my word that the storm is by no means violent; as you may be convinced when I tell you that
I have

I have been watching a ship going out to sea; which would not be, if there was danger."

At this moment the maid brought Mrs. Davenant's little girl into the hall, and Hortensia taking it from the woman, brought it to her friend. She caught it in her arms, and pressing it to her bosom, sat down on one of the window seats. A violent flood of tears now flowed from her eyes, and Hortensia beheld the agony of her mind with the tenderest pity.

"For the sake of this dear little one," cried she, as she hung over her weeping friend: "for the sake of your husband, I conjure you, Maria, not to give indulgence to this tender softness. Rather preserve your courage for a season

season when weakness would be ruin ;
and not exhaust in useless sorrow those
spirits which may be necessary for your
husband's felicity, and your own."

" Your expressions are ambiguous,"
said Mrs. Davenant.

Hortensia made no answer, for she
was perfectly contented to have been
able to excite the curiosity of her friend,
and thus draw her mind from its griefs.



CHAP. VII.

THE next morning Lord Ruffel paid his accustomed visit. His countenance was unusually animated; and as he entered the room, he asked Mrs. Davenant, whether she had heard from the captain.

“No,” replied she, sighing.

“I wonder at that,” rejoined his lordship; “for there are several letters arrived from the Diana. She reached Martinique without any accident, and
without

without even a single person being ill during the voyage."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Mrs. Davenant fervently, and her fine features glowing with transport at this happy and long wished for intelligence. "May you ever," she added, addressing Lord Ruffel, and rising as she offered him her hand: "May you ever, my dear Lord, be the messenger of such blissful tidings to your friends; and your benevolent heart will often taste the most refined pleasure."

Lord Ruffel did indeed feel exquisite delight, as this lovely woman, superior to idle prudery, permitted him to take the reward of his good news from her lips; and then turning to Hortensia,
he

he said, "Will not Miss Sydney thank me for intelligence of St. Aubin?"

She was unable to answer; but he kissed away the tear of rapture that hung glistening on her cheek, which his words had dyed with crimson.

Mrs. Davenant now expressed some astonishment that none of their friends had written, and Lord Ruffel said, "It does indeed surprize me; and I am very certain that there are no letters for you. I happened to go for mine myself, and at the post-office I met a gentleman, who had just opened a letter, which he said came from the Diana, and told me what I have just now mentioned of her. I then enquired, if there were any letters for you, desiring to have the pleasure of conveying them

to

to you myself: but I heard there were none either for you or Miss Sydney, and concluded that the man had sent them and forgot it."

"It is astonishing," said Mrs. Davenant, with difficulty restraining her tears; "and I own most cruelly wounding to me. How could Harry be so unkind, or St. Aubin so neglectful."

"I cannot conceive it possible," said Hortensia but that there must be some mistake in the office."

"I fear you entertain a vain hope, Miss Sydney," rejoined Lord Ruffel; "but I will myself return and insist on the post-master making another search for the letters you so anxiously desire to receive."

Mrs. Davenant thanked him for the

VOL. I, K kindness

kindness of this offer, and he immediately left them for the purpose.

The interval of his absence was spent in the most anxious and painful suspense; but he soon returned with a confirmation of the intelligence that there were no letters for the ladies.

He said, however, that he had seen one from the master of the *Diana* to his wife, in which he mentioned, that the Captain, and master Wilmot, were in good health and spirits.

"And my dear worthy St. Aubin?" cried Mrs. Davenant, who lost not, in her mortification for her friends, her concern for their safety,

"Was not particularly mentioned," replied Lord Ruffel, adding, "But I
have

have no doubt you will hear from them all by the next ship that arrives; and till then, you must be content to know that they were well."

Some days afterwards Lord Ruffel brought a letter to Mrs. Davenant, which was open, from the wafer being melted away.

"From Martinique!" cried Mrs. Davenant joyfully; "And from George."

'My dear Madam, (wrote the young sailor)

'I am sorry that you and Miss Sydney can receive no greater pleasure
'from the ship that carries this, than
'a letter from your grateful George.
'I wish I could describe to you my
'feelings, when I think that this pa-

K 2

'per

per will come before you, and that
you will find satisfaction in reading
it. I would gladly give up the pleasure
of writing to you, could either
my guardian or St. Aubin write;
but the former is at present on board
the Admiral on business, and the
latter has been for some days doing
duty in the Racehorse, now at Antigua.
The Panther, which is lying
to for half an hour to take our letters,
is bound for Portsmouth; and
the Captain is so impatient to be under
weigh, that I have only time to
inform you, that all your friends are
well. Tell Miss Sydney, that though
I love my guardian and Mr. St. Aubin,
and like to be a sailor, I frequently wish
that I could walk with
her

‘her on an evening as I used to do.
‘I do not forget all her kindness to
‘poor George Wilmot, and often,
‘very often, she is spoken of, when
‘Mr. St. Aubin and I are on watch,
‘and walking the quarter-deck at night;
‘and indeed, dear madam, I love you
‘as well as if you were my own mother,
‘and my sister too; and so does
‘Mr. St. Aubin.

‘Give my love to Miss Hortensia,
‘to dear Lord Ruffel, and to all those
‘friends who are good enough to en-
‘quire for your affectionate and
‘grateful

G. WILMOT.

‘Martinique, Dec. 23.’

“Sweet fellow!” exclaimed Mrs. Davenant, as she concluded the letter

and gave it to Hortensia, who shed tears over this artless testimony of the affection of her young friend; and which seemed to convince her she was not forgotten by St. Aubin. She congratulated Mrs. Davenant on such pleasing news as it contained; and when she read to Lord Ruffel the part where he was mentioned, he was quite delighted. He praised the little sailor most warmly, and taking up a pen from the standish that lay on the table, he wrote a draft on his banker for an hundred pounds, which he presented with a timid air to Mrs. Davenant, saying, "Will you, madam, pardon me, if I give you the trouble of conveying the amount of this, in the most convenient manner, to my friend George Wilmot, as a small recompence
for

for the pleasure his kind remembrance of me has given me; and assure him, that I will use all my interest in his favor, as soon as his time as a midshipman is expired."

Mrs. Davenant accepted the draft, with silent gratitude from this generous friend: for though her pride might be a little hurt at her relation receiving a pecuniary obligation from a comparative stranger, she could not bear to mortify his Lordship by a rejection of his proffered kindness; neither did she think she had a right to refuse such a benefaction for George, whose whole fortune did not amount to more than three times that sum. The late Mr. Wilmot's marriage had been an imprudent one, and his conduct so thoughtless, that at
his

his death, which was preceded by that of his wife, nothing remained for their son, but the house and furniture, which did little more than pay the debts.

Hortensia was now, more than ever, at a loss to account for the conduct of Lord Ruffel; she perplexed herself in vain to discover his motives for acting as he did: they were to her inexplicable. His behaviour was such, as encouraged Mrs. Davenant to suppose him the lover of her friend; and she doubted not, that nothing but her coldness prevented him from declaring himself. She often secretly blamed her conduct, but she had long ceased to chide her for it; as whenever she did so, Hortensia justified herself with a warmth that admitted not of opposition.

From

From the time that Lord Ruffel avowed to Hortensia that he entertained a hopeless passion, her suspicions which had often been excited, became almost positive, and she had kept an attentive watch over him, if possible to detect, or at least, prevent his succeeding in any unwarrantable design.

CHAP. VIII.

Crimson leaves the rose adorn,
But beneath it lurks the thorn!
Fair and flow'ry is the brake,
But it hides the vengeful snake!

SHENSTONE.

ONE evening, about three weeks after the letter from Martinique set Mrs. Davenant's heart at ease for the safety of her husband, she was alarmed for the life of her infant, who was taken extremely ill. Lord Ruffel, who was particularly fond of the little girl, had
had

had it on his knee for some time; and observed, how uncommonly dull it was. Mrs. Davenant's tendernefs was immediately alarmed, and ſhe carried the child away to bed, leaving Hortenfia with Lord Ruffel. A ſilence of a few minutes ſucceeded her leaving the room; and Lord Ruffel then ſaid, "How completely, and in every thing, that woman is an angel!" Hortenfia aſſented, and he continued, "Yet, Miſs Sydney, an injurious and unfeeling world, would condemn the adoration due to her virtues."

"Pardon me, my Lord," ſaid Hortenfia, "For once the world is wrongfully accuſed. It never cenſures the juſt eſteem and admiration every one is diſpoſed to feel for the goodneſs of
Mrs.

Mrs. Davenant; and even approves of the adoration her husband pays her."

"But shall she, whose merits claim universal homage, only receive that of one person?"

"Mrs. Davenant is too modest to require more," said Hortensia.

There was a long pause; during which Lord Ruffel seemed absorbed in thought; but suddenly recollecting himself, he said with some emotion, "How far, Hortensia, do you think that man culpable, who having long doated on a woman, (doated on her before she ever saw the person to whom she united herself) and having in vain struggled to suppress his passion, finds the task impossible, and indulges it?"

"I think him so far culpable, my
Lord,

Lord: though an unhappy fatality, or mental imbecility, may render him unequal to the task of conquering the attachment, nothing can excuse the criminality of cherishing it. And though in the first instance he is an object of pity, in the other we naturally abhor him."

"But will no circumstances palliate the offence?"

"None, my Lord."

"Then I am doomed to appear criminal in your eyes, from the cause that I once mentioned to you. But I will hope for your pity, when I relate the particulars of my story. Very early in life, I saw, and loved a woman, beautiful as an angel; with all the soft and amiable simplicity of a village girl, with the polished elegance of the highest rank.

I beheld her, uninterested by my attentions, and seeming to look on me, only as one of the many, whom her beauty, rank, and fortune drew around her. She treated me with politeness in common with all who approached her; but I saw, that the most lively pleasure danced in her eyes, when she beheld one fortunate youth, who (I am confident without desiring it) had stole away her heart. From the vast distance fortune had placed between them, I continued to hope I might at length succeed, till her marriage with the man she loved plunged me in despair.

I then quitted England. I left behind me happiness, distinction, all that could flatter youthful ambition, and
sought

fought to regain my peace, but found that I had left my heart in the possession of the only woman who had ever interested its feelings. It was in vain that I tried to forget her: her image intruded itself into every scene; my nightly dreams were of her; and I at length fancied I should be less miserable if I could sometimes see her. I accordingly returned to my native country, and hastened to this house, which was in the neighbourhood of her habitation; but the first news I heard was, that she was about to leave the kingdom. On the evening succeeding that of my arrival at home, I beheld her commit herself to the treacherous ocean, determined to encounter every danger, contented to possess the society of her hus-

band. Not for worlds, Miss Sydney, would I endure again the tortures of that night; or of many of those cheerless days by which it was succeeded. I wandered over this romantic country, in the fruitless hope of losing those bitter remembrances that incessantly stung my heart. I trod those paths where she had walked, and lingered in the scene where she had frequented; but her beautiful image still presented itself to my eyes, and I pursued the fair shadow till I lost myself.

At length propitious fortune threw us into the same vicinity! I saw her daily! I hung for hours on the soft accents of her voice; but they were tranquil effusions of friendship that flowed from her lips; or if she ever assumed a tone
of

of lively tendernefs, it was to the child of my rival! This was torture to me. How many times have I flown from her prefence; nor ventured again even to approach her habitation, till the shades of night enveloped the earth, and all the houfhould were retired to reft. Then would I ramble over thofe places where in the day-time ſhe had been; and watch under her window in the hope of feeing even her ſhadow, as ſhe traversed the room, before ſhe put out her taper."

He paused; and Hortenfia, who had appeared attentive, though ſhe thought not of Lord Ruſſel or his diſtreſſes, now recollecting herſelf, ſaid, "Wherefore, my Lord, or for what purpoſe, do you torment yourſelf with dwelling on paſt ſufferings?"

“In the hope of exciting your pity!”

“Those complaints, which are made only with that view, in general fail of their effect,” said Hortensia.

“But could I induce the gentle Miss Sydney, to commiserate my sorrows,” resumed Lord Ruffel, “I know that her generosity will prompt her to relieve them.”

“It ought not to be in my power, my Lord, and consequently is not. I wish not to be made the confidante of a tale like yours; I therefore request you will be silent for the future, and what is past I will endeavour to forget.”

She then said, she would enquire for the little Davenant, and left the room. Instead, however, of going to the nursery, she went to her own apartment;
from

from whence, she returned to the drawing-room in a quarter of an hour, and found Lord Ruffel still there: Mrs. Davenant was with him, and he seemed earnestly endeavouring to sooth the alarm her countenance betrayed, she felt on the account of her child. He did not observe the entrance of Hortensia, but continued his exhortation to Mrs. Davenant to compose herself, and then, wishing her good night, went away.

Hortensia was from this time perfectly convinced of the justice of her doubts of Lord Ruffel: his specious kindness, and counterfeit virtues, were now unmasked; and she determined, in case he did not conduct himself with more prudence, to warn his destined victim of his base designs. In the mean time, she

she suffered the most poignant uneasiness, (often not unmixed with resentment) at not hearing from St. Aubin. She fancied that his not writing was a just punishment to her for so readily permitting the correspondence he proposed.

“Ah!” did she often say to herself, “St. Aubin despises, and neglects me! Conscious that I cannot withdraw my heart from him, he cruelly trifles with my affection, and no doubt expects that when it shall please him to say a few tender words, my weakness will induce me to forget his contemptuous neglect. But no, Lionel, if I must still love, pride shall never desert me, and it shall teach me to resent.”

While her mind was in this distracted
state,

state, the time imperceptibly drew on, when it would be necessary that she should answer the letter of William Davenant. But, *how* answer it? It had been her intention to inform him candidly of her situation with regard to St. Aubin, but *now*, she found that would be impossible. There was something so humiliating in the idea of confessing that she loved, and held herself engaged to a man who seemed careless of preserving her affection, that she could not resolve to do it: and in her answer to the letter of Davenant, she contented herself with assuring him, in the strongest manner, that though he possessed her warmest esteem, her heart never could be his; and that her hand never should be separated from it. This letter,

letter, which cost her much trouble in composing, was at length written, and sent to London to go by the next packet; and Hortensia would once more have returned to the gloomy tranquility, in which she had so long been sunk, had it not been that the conduct of Lord Ruffel gave her mind ample employment. It was a task ill adapted to the gentle nature of Hortensia, and the noble candour and generosity of her mind, to watch the progress of a vicious design; and mark the windings of cunning through all its various mazes: but all this guise was soon thrown off by Lord Ruffel, and he appeared to her, (such as she always suspected him to be) a perfect villain.

One evening Mrs. Davenant enquired
of

of Hortensia, why she persisted in entertaining such a bad opinion of Lord Ruffel, when his conduct was such as might be thought to inspire a very different sentiment.

“I think ill of him,” said Hortensia, “because I know him to be unprincipled! His virtues are but specious; the unhappiness of which he complains is the effect of criminal indulgence, and he mourns in the hope of receiving that pity which will destroy the peace of the heart into which it enters.”

“You say you *know* all this, Hortensia!” said Mrs. Davenant; “and at any rate, I believe you think yourself certain of what you say: but beware my young friend! If virtue is thus easily injured

injured in the opinion of innocence and candour, the world will become detestable. I cannot think you have proof of this." "Do you allow his own words to be proof?" demanded Hortensia: "Or is it necessary that his atrocious designs should succeed, to convince you that I do not wrong the innocent? Last night, in this very spot, he unmasked a villain! a base designer! and divested himself of one vice at least, the most detestable—hypocrisy!"

Hortensia pronounced the last word with emphasis; and Mrs. Davenant exclaimed, in a tone of mingled horror, and incredulity, "Do not say so, Hortensia! Can Ruffel be base and dishonorable? Oh! let me not credit any thing that disgraces human nature!"

"It

"It is very true, Maria; and after this explanation you will not be surprized that I shall in future decline seeing him."

"And so shall I," said Mrs Davenant with animated firmness. "The man, who dares insult my Hortensia, shall never more be admitted to my presence."

Hortensia warmly embraced her, saying, "Fear not, Maria, that this generous effort of friendship will be unrewarded; a time will come, when you shall know all the reasons for my conduct: at present, excuse me."

She hastily left the room; and a few minutes afterwards she had the satisfaction of seeing Lord Ruffel pass under her window, after having been refused

admittance to the house. He looked up, saw Hortensia, and bowing, walked on. The next day the ladies were again denied, when he came to visit them; and Hortensia purposely shewed herself at the window, to mark that his exclusion was meant to be pointed.

The same evening she received the following billet :

‘ To Miss SYDNEY.

‘ Why, charming Sydney, do you
‘ so cruelly refuse me admittance? I
‘ know that Mrs. Davenant’s doors
‘ being shut against me, is not owing
‘ to her wishes. I beseech you to re-
‘ peal my sentence of banishment.
‘ Consider the conversation that passed
‘ between

‘between us on the last evening we
‘met, in a less heinous light. You,
‘who so well know what it is to love,
‘should not be so severe in resenting
‘the errors and transgressions it occa-
‘sions.

‘Ah! then permit me to see you
‘at least; to endeavour to convince
‘you that I wish to prove myself your
‘friend in procuring for you all those
‘enjoyments you so cruelly condemn
‘me for desiring to taste.

‘RUSSEL.’

The daring libertinism of this letter,
and the insult offered to her in it, would
have shocked and wounded Hortensia,
had she not recollected, that from a man
like his Lordship, no propriety of con-

duet could secure her from an affront; since Mrs. Davenant, in whose conduct the most vigilant and malicious observer could not trace any thing that was not perfectly correct and prudent, should have become the object of his vicious designs. She therefore with cool indignation, wrote, and returned the following answer to his letter.

‘ To the Rt. Hon. Ld. Viscount Ruffel.

‘ My Lord,

‘ I am by no means displeased to
‘ find that you so justly attribute to
‘ me your exclusion from this house.
‘ I should feel mortified that *even*
‘ your lordship should suppose me
‘ capable of passing by, without re-
‘ sentment, your conduct on the even-
ing

‘ing you mention. You must (could
‘you believe so) imagine me as dead
‘to friendship, honor, justice, and
‘propriety, as Lord Ruffel! Unde-
‘serving the confidence of Mrs. Da-
‘venant! Unworthy of the generous
‘kindness of her husband and his
‘brother! In a word—as devoid of
‘principle as your lordship!

‘An error once confessed, to me,
‘loses its criminality; but when *glo-*
‘*ried* in, it becomes detestable. Did
‘I not *know* your lordship, I might
‘perhaps be dubious, as to the mean-
‘ing of the latter part of your letter;
‘but from the licentiousness you do
‘not blush to boast of, I consider it
‘as a most unpardonable insult, and
‘as such, shall resent it.

M 3

‘Assure

‘Assure yourself, that (should I
‘even be compelled to wound the
‘ears of Mrs. Davenant with the
‘particulars of your baseness) you
‘receive no further admittance here,
‘whilst you can be excluded by

‘HORTENSIA SYDNEY.’

When Lord Ruffel received this letter, his surprize was at least equal to his vexation. He did not expect that Hortensia would give him a favorable answer; but he imagined that she would have been silent; and he hoped by that means to procure a pretence for tormenting her with sollicitations till she yielded to assist him in his designs. This spirited check to his manœuvres, rendered him for some time incapable,
even

even of reconcerting his plans : however, the interval was but a short one ; though discomfitted he was not yet entirely repulsed : for it is a not less true than melancholy consideration, that those striking abilities, which lend double lustre to virtue in her native radiance, are, when once contaminated by a single vicious sentiment, the means of plunging the soul into still deeper perdition, than those humble talents, which lend no light to goodness ; nor create a sigh of regret for the fall of their possessor from rectitude.



CHAP. IX.

I do condemn mine ears that have
So long attended thee. If thou wert honorable
Thou would'st have told this tale for virtue, not
For such an end thou seek'st; as base, as strange.
Thou wrong'st a gentleman, who is as far
From thy report, as thou from honor.

CYMBELINE.

ABOUT a week from the time when
the doors of Ruffeltown were first closed
against the proprietor of the mansion,
as Mrs. Davenant was returning from
the house of a friend, whom she had
gone to visit, without Hortensia (who

was

was ill with a violent cold) she was overtaken by Lord Ruffel, who was on horseback. He immediately dismounted, and desiring his servant to lead his horse home directly, joined Mrs. Davenant.

"I had feared, madam," said his lordship, "that though your servant did not confess you were ill, that indisposition had been the cause of my not having seen you lately."

"I have not been in the least unwell, since I had the honor of seeing your lordship," replied Mrs. Davenant.

"Permit me, then, dearest madam, to enquire why my visits are no longer acceptable to you?"

"To *me*, my lord, (so great is my debt of gratitude to you) whatever may be your errors, they must be; but till those
errors

errors are atoned for, my receiving your visits, must, to Miss Sydney, wear an appearance of unkindness in me, and insult in your lordship."

"I am certainly very unfortunate!" said Lord Ruffel, in a tone of mingled sorrow and impatient vexation; "very unfortunate indeed!"

"And why are you so, my lord?" demanded Mrs. Davenant. "You have wandered in the mazes of error; but the plain path of honor is yet retrievable, if you will listen to the ingenuous voice of native goodness."

"But you, frigid and unkind Maria! you shut the gate of happiness against me! and refuse to guide me in the way of felicity."

"No, my lord:" she replied, "I would
not.

not. I would lead you back to that path from which you have strayed! Come to me, recommended by truth and honor, and you may expect every thing from my services."

For several minutes they continued to proceed slowly and in silence: the bosom of Lord Ruffel seemed agitated by conflicting emotions; which gave to his countenance an expression of frantic wildness, and caused his whole frame to tremble.

"Maria!" said he at last, with an air of the greatest perturbation, as he caught both her hands, "I am miserable beyond endurance! and yet you do not pity me!"

"I do indeed pity you, my Lord!"
returned

returned Mrs. Davenant. "For surely that wretch is deserving of pity, in whose bosom the worm of conscience dies not, and who owes his misery to his own vices."

Lord Ruffel was silent for a few moments: he seemed endeavouring to recollect all the arguments that a destructive sophistry could afford in justification of the crime he meditated; but his ideas were again reduced to a chaos, when the voice of Mrs. Davenant, with the mild and gentle commiseration of an angel, pronounced, "Adieu my once valued, my unhappy friend! I shall ever remember you with tender pity, but we must meet no more! Maria Davenant must not be the friend of the determined seducer of innocence."

Stung

Stung to the quick by this reproof, and by the repulsive motion of her hand, as she turned from him to go homewards; rendered desperate by the thought that he should see her no more; though he still unconsciously cherished a ray of hope (from the softness of her manner) that her *heart* was not his foe; he at once, and with a vehemence that terrified as much as the horrid design he unfolded shocked her, declared for how long a period he had cherished a passion for her; adding passionately, "While my rival deserved your affection, I would not wound his peace by seeking to supplant him; but when the most palpable neglect, sufficient to sting the most gentle of your angel sex to vengeance, degraded Davenant below con-

VOL. I, N sideration,

sideration, I fearlessly yielded to my passion, in the hope that it would be in time rewarded! That the soothing, the attentive lover, might triumph over the cold neglectful husband; and the woman I had long adored might be mine!"

Horror, astonishment, and resentment, kept Mrs. Davenant silent for some time; and then with a dignity, which in grief, anger, or alarm, never forsook her, she said, "And can you indeed think, vile, unprincipled wretch! that the woman who has vowed love and duty to Henry Davenant; who is honored by his noble confidence, can ever betray him?—Or that the heart, which has for eight years retained its loyalty to him, can ever be transferred

to you?—Away, my lord! nor dare to suppose you could triumph over the honor of Maria Davenant! She is far above you, and secure from your attacks.”

“Secure!” repeated Lord Ruffel, “Where, lovely Maria, is your security from an adoring lover? Where is that husband whom you so tamely worship?—Indifferent to your yielding, or your resistance!”

Mrs. Davenant’s face glowed with conscious pride and indignant spirit, as she replied, “My husband, it is true, is far from me; but think not you shall with impunity insult me. While the gallant sailor encounters danger in his country’s cause, *that* country is bound to protect his family; and there is not a

man who calls himself an officer, that would not fly to shield the wife of Davenant from your licentious insolence.

It was now Lord Ruffel's turn to be mute with astonishment: he saw the tender woman, who trembled at a wintry blast, when she thought that it endangered those she loved, proudly defy him; and with haughty scorn, rebuke him for his libertinism. He doubted if he was in his senses, and almost unconsciously continued to walk by her side. Mrs. Davenant stopped; this awoke him from his surprize, and he began again to urge his love.

"Peace!" cried Mrs. Davenant, indignantly, "nor dare to insult me with a word of any kind."

"I do

“ I do not mean to insult you, madam.”——

“ Is not your addressing me an insult ?” demanded Mrs. Davenant. “ Is not your staying a moment in my presence an insult ?—Is it not the grossest insult, to imagine that I would even listen to an apology for your behavior ?”

Thus saying, with one glance at the humbled lord, that spoke more eloquently than even her words, contempt and detestation, she hastened forwards, leaving her meditated seducer rooted to the spot, with absolute consternation at her courage and dignity.

When Mrs. Davenant arrived at home, she repaired to the chamber of Hortensia, to whom she related all that had passed while she had been out ;

which could not give any surprize to her, as she was no stranger to his lordship's plans. She did not, however, expect that he would have so soon thrown off all the semblance of virtue; as she concluded that (from the caution he had hitherto used) he would rather endeavour to work by sap, than by open attack. While the former was his plan, she thought she might, by the most vigilant activity, counter-work him; and she could not resolve to wound the feelings of Mrs. Davenant, by informing her of the truth: chusing rather to endure the mortification of having it supposed he had made a free proposal to herself; as that would as effectually exclude him from the presence of her friend. Mrs. Davenant was now fully
sensible

sensible of the generosity of her conduct, and her gratitude was worthy of the sensibility of her heart.

When, in the solitude of her own chamber, Hortensia reflected on the conduct of Mrs. Devanant, the character of that lady appeared to her in a new point of view; and she felt a large portion of the astonishment it had given to Lord Ruffel. Though possessing a noble courage in the cause of another, Hortensia was, in regard to herself timid almost to excess; and had she been placed in the situation of Mrs. Devanant, terror would have overcome every other feeling: nor would she have dared to threaten him with punishment; which, if inflicted, must endanger the life of
some

some friend or relative. Had Mrs. Davenant's natural protector and avenger been at home, she too would have felt as Hortensia fancied *she* would do. Then, fears for the husband would have overcome indignation towards the seducer! But now, assured that Davenant was at a distance by an incontrovertable duty, she had no terrors regarding the means he might use to revenge the insult offered to his wife; and conscious that on herself alone every thing must depend, she wanted not courage to become the defender of her own and her husband's honor.

CHAP. X.

A New source of anxiety now presented itself to the inhabitants of Ruffelstown, which threatened to render the little family of Davenant exiles from their country.

Mrs. Davenant, who (all soft and amiable as she was) had a soul which shrunk not from any exertion, when convinced by reflection that she ought to make it, in the course of a sleepless night,

night, which succeeded the agitating morning that unveiled the treachery of her fancied friend, meditated deeply, and revolved in her mind the plan she ought now to pursue. She saw herself indebted, for the house in which she, her friend, and child resided, to the unprincipled Ruffel; and the idea was too hateful to be endured: but how to avoid it, was a matter of the most serious and painful consideration. Captain Davenant had left her but slenderly provided with money; though he had denied himself all those indulgencies common to officers of his rank in a West-India voyage, to give her such a sum as would support his family, creditably at least, during his absence, which, unless something extraordinary occurred, would,

would, in all probability, last three years. But at the time he bade adieu to England, he had felicitated himself in the idea that his Maria was comfortably established in a residence such as his finances would not enable him to procure for her, free of all expence; and that she and her lovely infant Eliza, were secure in the protection of one of the most amiable and honorable of friends, and of men. Their situation was now changed; and could he have beheld that change—could he have seen his wife obliged for the roof that sheltered her from the elements, to the wretch who could attempt to deprive her of her honor, while he made a shew of virtuous love to her friend? The soul
of

of Davenant, would have endured the cruellest anguish and mortification.

To save him from this, was now, Mrs. Davenant thought, her duty; and as she could not afford either to pay Lord Ruffel for the use of his house, or to take another, without removing to a distant part of the kingdom, which she had not money to undertake, she formed an idea of retiring into Normandy; where, in the neighbourhood of Rochelle, was a house that she had once inhabited during a voyage that her husband made while he was still a lieutenant. Could she now obtain the same place on the terms she had formerly done, she thought she would be extremely fortunate; as the saving to be made in every necessary of life in France, would

would leave her a sufficiency for house rent, without encumbering herself with debts.

A thought now presented itself, which to a person less accustomed to struggle with difficulties than Mrs. Davenant, would have been almost overwhelming: she recollected that she did not know a single person to whom she could make an application, to know whether the house she wished to take was untenanted; but the activity of the mind of Maria soon taught her to overcome this check to her plans. She formed the resolution of hiring a fishing-boat, in which (leaving her child to the care of Hortensia) she would pass over into Normandy; and having secured a residence for her family,

might return for them; or write to them to join her at Rochelle.

When she came down to breakfast in the morning, she informed Hortensia of the result of her night's deliberations; adding, "It now depends entirely on you, my dear Hortensia, to say whether you will bear me company in my exile. At the time when I acceded to our William's wishes, and offered you an asylum in the house I then accounted mine, I warned you, that except at such times as Captain Davenant happened to be at home, you would have no other society than mine, which I said, I would endeavour to make agreeable to you. To you, then, I think no very material change can appear

pear from going to reside in France; and most truly thankful shall I be for your company; but I wish not to influence you on the subject: it concerns me too nearly for me to be a proper judge in the cause."

"Then, madam," replied Hortensia, "I must myself decide; and declare, that till you wish my absence, I shall never abandon you, and your child. Nor is there any thing meritorious in my following you to France. I might, perhaps, (but it were not wisdom) have preferred remaining in that spot where—" "Every spot is hallowed by the remembrance of friends!" said Mrs. Davenant, observing Hortensia hesitated.

"Ah! my dear girl," she added, "I plainly perceive that you indulge in a

sort of fanciful sensibility, which clouds the sunshine of your life more than does serious sorrow; and the delicacy of the imagination, takes place of that of the heart. I know that nothing more strongly recalls the idea of an absent friend (and that nothing can be more agreeably soothing) than to wander amidst scenes where we have enjoyed their society: but a heart that is possessed by a sincere affection needs not those adventitious aids to memory."

Hortensia was not superior to the rest of her sex, and therefore very naturally felt a little hurt, to find her favorite idea combatted, and left the room abruptly; nor was Mrs. Davenant in the least displeased at her doing so.

In the various scenes of life through
which

which that lady had passed in the course of eight years, she had become an observer upon human nature; and she could not be ignorant that there are a set of sentimental prejudices in almost every young, and uncontaminated female mind; and that they think they will

“Sooner part with life than give it up! ROWE.”

But where there is a good understanding, the dream of romance soon vanishes, and the (once) sentimental girl, becomes, like Mrs. Davenant, the more clear-sighted to the foibles of others, from being, by experience, acquainted with their symptoms.

When the subject of the removal to France was again renewed by Mrs. Davenant to Hortensia, the latter without hesitation advised, that instead of going

over alone, as Mrs. Davenant first proposed to do; that they should all embark together as soon as possible, and trust to chance for their procuring a comfortable residence, as soon as they reached France. To this Mrs. Davenant agreed, and it was finally settled that in a week, they should leave England.

On the evening preceding their intended voyage, the little Eliza not being perfectly well, Mrs Davenant would not leave the nursery, and Hortensia therefore alone went out to walk, in order to take a last farewell of the agreeable scenes about Russelstown.

Fearful of attracting the attention, and censure of Mrs. Davenant, if she passed the side of the house in which were the nursery windows, she took an
unusual

unusual path, and crossing the lawn, strolled down the avenue that led from the west front of the house to the sea. It was yet early in the spring, but the weather was remarkably fine, and the lovely verdure of the grass, with the deeper green of the trees under which Hortensia walked, prevented any appearance of winter "still lingering on the plains." The sun was near setting, and diffused a deep and glowing colour over the boundless horizon formed by the ocean, and striking with a softer lustre the objects presented by the shore. The principal of these was a high rocky headland (forming one side of the bay in which Russellstown stood) on the extremest point of which, enveloped in the soft mist of coming twy-light, was a church,

church, belonging to a little village, that was extended along the sands about half a mile below. The spire of the church had long served as a land-mark, and nothing could surpass its whiteness, except the surf that broke over a long ridge of rocks that rendered that side of the bay dangerous to shipping.

Hortensia now descended to the beach that lay between the lawn and the sea; and as she did so recollected that it was here she had first seen St. Aubin. On the day of her arrival at Russellstown, she had gone out to take a walk with Captain Davenant, her brother, and Mr. Wilmot, who was at that time (together with his little nephews) on a visit to his sister. They had strolled down to the cove, and on reaching it, had
discovered

discovered St. Aubin employed in amusing Wilmot Davenant by throwing pebbles into the water, which bounding along its surface, excited the delight and astonishment of the child.

Hortensia now recalled to mind every trivial circumstance of this their first meeting, and fancied she again beheld him; and marked as she had then done, the striking grace and elegance of his figure, in the attitude of flinging the pebbles to the greatest possible distance. Nor in the picture, which her imagination drew, was little Wilmot forgotten. He was a beautiful child of seven years of age, with all the spirit and animation of his father, and the mild sweetness of his mother, in countenance and disposition. While Hortensia was occupied in

in these reflections, the evening began to close, and she crossed the cove, with an intention of returning home by a path that led along the side of the cliffs of Beachy: when she reached the opposite boundary of the strand, she perceived a small Norway skiff moored close to the rock, but without any person near it: the oars were lying in it, and a large white boat-cloak lined with blue, was thrown upon one of the seats. This reminded Hortensia of the person whom she had so often seen on the lawn of Russellstown; and she was not surprized at the appearance of his bark, as the full moon, which was then rising, informed her that the spring-tides were at their height.

As she had no apprehension regarding
this

this contraband trader, (for so she had long concluded the nocturnal wanderer to be) she very quietly ascended the rough path, that led to a walk midway on the cliffs, whence she could most agreeably reach the house.

As she walked slowly along, her eye was attracted by something white that was incessantly moving before her, apparently borne by the wind from place to place; and perceiving it to be a paper, she quickened her steps till she came near enough to pick it up. It was a single sheet of paper, creased in such a manner, as proved it to have been loosely folded; and Hortensia, concluding she had herself dropt it, put it into her pocket, and returned home.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

She, and the remnant of her weeping train,
Whose faithful love still link'd them to her side,
Torn from their dwelling——

M'KENZIE.

AS soon as Hortensia had found, from the account of its mother, that the little Eliza was tolerably well, she went to her own room, and there busied herself in completing her packing; which was now only to put up a few books. For this purpose she had occasion

sion for a good deal of paper, and she happened to take from her pocket, the sheet she had put there during her walk on the cliffs, Surprized at perceiving that it was written in a hand she was unacquainted with, she took it nearer to the light, and read the contents. It appeared to be the continuation of the subject of another sheet, and the first words were these :

‘From the reasons I have mentioned,
‘and many others, your situation is a
‘hazardous one; but let not that de-
‘prive you of resolution. You have
‘a guardian, my Hortensia, who,
‘though unknown to you, watches
‘over you with all the fond solicitude
‘of a sylph; who would, if possible,

‘turn aside every shaft misfortune
‘levelled at your bosom; or endow
‘you with fortitude to encounter their
‘consequences. To-morrow, Hor-
‘tensia, the waters of the channel will
‘roll between you and England; but
‘the genius of friendship, that mild
‘divinity for whose worship you be-
‘come an exile from your country,
‘shall not forsake you. In a form
‘less lovely, with a soul less tender,
‘but equally pure as that of the beau-
‘tiful Maria, it will attend you: be
‘ever near to warn you of coming
‘danger, or to avert the blow that
‘would strike at your peace. Fear
‘not then, my Hortensia! perilous as
‘may be your destiny, and thorny
‘your

‘your path, the hand of tender affection shall guide and support you!
‘Hesitate not to accept of kindness
‘from such as may offer it to you: I
‘would not have you dependant solely
‘on myself; for the person who teaches
‘the lesson of universal distrust deserves not to be confided in! For
‘who I am ——— ——— ———

Here the writing was brought to an abrupt conclusion, and Hortensia sincerely regretted it: but her heart was too much alive to a sentiment of gratitude for the warm interest the writer appeared to take in her destiny, to let curiosity remain the predominant feeling in her mind: she could not, however, so entirely divest herself of it, as not to

ponder some time, in hopes of recollecting some friend of her own, or her father's, who could be the writer of the paper: which she now perused over and over, but without deriving the least satisfaction from it; further than that one always feels, in the consciousness of not being wholly neglected by those around us.

In a state of the utmost perplexity relative to her unknown adviser, Hortensia now finished her packing, and retired to bed. She did not however sleep; and the hour, when the tide would admit of her departure from Russelltown, arrived, and found her still restless and unrefreshed by slumber.

The sun had not risen half an hour, when Mrs. Davenant, accompanied by
Hortensia,

Hortensia, and attended by the nursery maid, who carried little Eliza, arrived at the cove where the boat waited, which was to convey them on board the fishing-smack Mrs. Davenant had hired to carry them to France. As Hortensia descended to the beach she looked around for the skiff that she had seen there the night before: it still remained moored close to the rock, which every moment threatened its demolition from the violence with which the tide forced it against the shore. She did not, however, make any observation on it, but embarking with her companions in the other boat, they were soon at a considerable distance from the land. When they were within a few hundred yards of the ship, Mrs. Davenant and Hortensia both mecha-

nically turned to take a last farewell of their late abode: heavy clouds hung over it, and thence increased the gloomy appearance of the dark grey fabric, that was partly discernible through the trees of venerable pine and still leafless ash, that surrounded the building. From thence their eyes insensibly were drawn to the contemplation of the cliff by which they had descended to the boat, and there perceived, that some person was standing on the beach. He was evidently of no mean rank, and though they were not near enough to distinguish his features, Mrs. Davenant and her friend at once concluded, that it must be Lord Ruffel; and as if blasted by the sight of him, turned disgusted from the shore; at which they neither of them
again

again glanced till it was impossible to mark any object particularly. Soon, even the coast faded from their view; and the two lovely exiles turned from contemplating the blue cloud, which was all they could now see of Britain, to strain their eyes in search of the hospitable shores of France.

C H A P. XII.

AFTER a passage, which the fineness of the weather would not permit to appear tedious, the voyagers beheld, not far distant, the gothic towers of St. Nicolas and de la Chaine, frowning with majestic beauty over the harbour of Rochelle, which they were once intended to guard, but could now only ornament.

As she passed the stoned isle of Ré, Hortensia had felt transported into a
wild

wild region of (might the expression be allowed) historic fiction. She fancied she could trace out the very spot, where the illustrious Salisbury landed, and where he had fallen a victim to the arts of the treacherous Malceon: but when she beheld the rich and varied beauty of the scene in the basin of Rochelle, she forgot every thing, except her admiration of that country where she was now to reside.

From the inn to which Mrs Davenant and her Family repaired on their landing, that lady procured a messenger, whom she sent to the Chateau de Celandelle, requesting to know from the person, who (when she was last at Rochelle) had the care of it, whether the
little

little Villa de Colombe, her former residence, was now untenanted.

Contrary to her expectations, the proprietor both of the chateau and the villa, now resided at the former; and on receiving Mrs. Davenant's message, immediately waited on her. He expressed his regret that it was not possible for him to accommodate Madame Davenant, as she desired, at the villa, as it was now undergoing some repairs; but if she, and the beautiful Mademoiselle Sydney (to whom he had been introduced) would honor him, by making his chateau their residence for a short time, he would do every thing in his power to have the villa speedily rendered, *comme il faut*, for their reception.

Monfieur

Monfieur de Celandelle (whose hofpitable invitation Mrs. Davenant immediately determined to accept) was now in his fixtieth year, and had once been uncommonly handsome; but years and ficknefs, had destroyed the graces of his form, and pilfered the locks that had profufely ornamented his now fallow countenance: while fome sorrows of an incurable nature, had given to his mind a deep fhade of gloomy melancholy. He had ftill fomewhat of the Frenchman in his manners: he could not divest himfelf of the custom of ufing the complimentary language of the court, in which he had been accuftomed to refide; but in de Celandelle it wore not the appearance of infincerity.

His

His words were sometimes those of a flatterer, but there was a cordial simplicity and benignity in his looks and voice, that proved it resulted from long habit, and the modes of his country; rather than from that frothy politeness, which comes not from, and never reaches the heart.

When Mrs. Davenant agreed to visit his chateau, he turned to Hortensia, saying, "And you, lovely Sydney, will honor me by your presence?"

Hortensia bowed: he resumed,

"Then youth and beauty shall once more grace my castle! Ah," he added with a deep sigh, "there was a time when every female charm presided there: when the sweet blossoms of virtue, sensibility, and beauty, bloomed in virgin
pride

pride for me; but the destroying blast of calamity has shaken my fabric of happiness and levelled its honors in the dust."

There was a touching sadness in his manner, that unspeakably affected Hortensia, and her eyes filled with tears: de Celandelle observed, and felt it; and from that moment Hortensia appeared to acquire an interest in his heart, far beyond what an intimacy of many weeks could have procured for her.

M. de Celandelle now proceeded to inform them, that a female relation of the name of de Polignac, was at present on a visit at his chateau, and would be rejoiced to have it in her power to shew any attentions to les belles Angloises: he then took his leave, promising

ing that his carriage should attend in an hour, to convey them to his home.

It was not long until the fair exiles entered the hospitable gates of the Chateau de Celandelle, where they were received by its beneficent owner, and introduced to his cousin, Madame de Polignac. This lady, (who was a widow) from being in rather distressed circumstances, M. de Celandelle thought possessed the most incontrovertible claim to his attention and kindness, and was therefore frequently at his house; but her mind, void of cultivation, her understanding below mediocrity, and manners that were something vulgar, entirely precluded friendship, or even intimacy. They, however, never disagreed,

agreed, except now and then, when the insatiable curiosity of the good lady became too tormenting to de Celandelle's nice sensibility and natural reserve.

Mrs. Davenant and Hortensia had not been many minutes seated in the saloon, when Madame de Polignac, took the opportunity of M. de Celandelle having left the room, to enquire of the ladies, from what part of England they had come; and being satisfied in this particular, and one or two more equally inconsequential for her to know, she said, "And so ladies you came to France by sea?" "We did, madam," replied Mrs. Davenant with admirable gravity of countenance.

"But you are really English!" re-

Q 2

sured

fumed the lady with eager incredulity.

“Really so, madam,” Mrs. Davenant answered.

“Well, that is very surprizing, for you are not at all reserved. For my part, I cannot think what my cousin de Celandelle meant, by charging me not to ask you any questions about yourselves, as probably you might not chuse to answer them. *Peste*, said I, these are no doubt well bred ladies, and they will like to have an opportunity given them of telling who they are.” “But the enquiry might seem impertinent, cousin,” said he. “Do I ever ask impertinent questions, cousin?” demanded I. “No, no,” said my cousin Celandelle; “but the English are so reserved, my good Clelie, that any questions might seem

as

as if you meant to be troublesome in asking them."

Madame de Polignac thus continued to run on, without once thinking it possible that her cousin could have been right, till his abrupt entrance put a stop to her volubility; or rather obliged her to confine herself to a whisper that edified only Mrs. Davenant; as M. de Celandelle joined Hortensia, who was standing at one of the windows. Observing that her eyes were fixed on the sea, which at a considerable distance bounded the prospect, and was faintly heard to break upon the rocks, he took her hand, saying in the gentle accents of sympathetic tenderness, "Why does that sweet countenance wear an air of sadness, in contemplating the waves

that roll between France and Britain? Do they divide you from some fond relative or mourning friend?"

"Alas! they do," replied Hortensia; "but England contains none such for me."

M. de Celandelle sighed deeply, and a short silence ensued, which Hortensia broke by asking him whether he was a native of Rochelle?

"No;" he answered: "My father and mother were both Normans, but I was born in Gascony. In Gascony too, much of my life has been spent; and its blessings and its sorrows have alike originated in that country."

"The latter at least," said Hortensia with a smile, "I should hope you have left there behind you."

"No."

"No," replied de Celandelle, "the memory of man is by nature formed retentive; and though his reason may be shaken by the bitterness of his sorrows, he cannot lose the remembrance of their source. To me, however, there needs not recollection to prevent the wounds of my soul from healing: the cause, whence arose my miseries, is ever present to me; and I must lose sensation, with every little solace I still possess, ere I can lose sight of it."

Hortensia was tempted to enquire what this was; but there was a dignity in M. de Celandelle, which, while the gentleness of his manners inspired sympathy, prevented the indulgence of any thing that looked like curiosity.

While Hortensia was considering in
what

what way she could most accurately make the enquiries she wished, de Celandelle resumed the original subject of their conversation :

“I remember,” said he, “that when I first left Gascony, which was when I was about twenty-one; an age, when the passions (or if I might call them so) the sensibilities of the human heart, are all alive, I felt much less than I thought I should have done; considering that near my paternal mansion, dwelt my Cecilia, whom I fondly loved; but I shall never forget the keen sensations of regret I experienced when I next saw the sea. It was on the sea-shore of Gascony that I first saw Cecilia; there I had ever delighted to ramble with her, and when I again beheld the ocean, it brought

brought her so strongly to my recollection, that I wildly called on her name, and strained my eyes in the fond delusive hope of seeing her slowly pacing the beach, singing as she walked!——”

“On the sea-shore I first saw Cecilia!” repeated de Celandelle, in a voice of ill-concealed emotion, and closing his eyes, as if he wished to shut out light for ever, since it could not bring him a repetition of the delight of beholding her.

Hortensia was unusually affected, for she remembered her first meeting with St. Aubin, and the idea that he had forgotten her, forced tears down her cheeks: “Ah Lionel!” she exclaimed mentally, you have forgotten me; but while the heart you have anguished beats with vital warmth, your image will be dear to it!”

Mrs.

Mrs. Davenant, who had disengaged herself from the loquacious Madame de Polignac, now advanced to the window, and entered into conversation with M. de Celandelle; while Hortensia gave herself up to silence, and to the thoughts of her far distant friends.

In the tranquil enjoyments of a pleasing retirement, some weeks now passed over the heads of Mrs. Davenant and Hortensia: painful recollection would sometimes intrude themselves on both ladies, and Madame de Polignac would frequently torment them with her incessant volubility; but when the trifling affairs of the neighbouring town had been canvassed, the good Clelie had nothing further to say; and the sensible
and

and interesting conversation of their host, never failed to prove a panacea for the inquietudes of the mind,

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

She loves to stray, and ponder as she strays,
Along the dreary monumental pile;
Where from the gothic roof, with ivy bound,
The whistling wind descends, and through the aisle
Sweeps the long hoarded dust, for ages heaped
On the vain records of the fainted dead!

Mrs. ROBINSON.

WHEN Hortensia had been near three weeks at the Chateau de Celandelle, as she was one night going to her own room before supper to fetch some work,

work, the bright light of the moon which shone full into a window at the farther end of the gallery in which her chamber was, tempted her to advance, to look into the garden. As she stood at the window, she observed a door, not quite closed, near her, and curiosity prompted her to push it a little open, to convince herself that no person was there, to whom her entrance would be an intrusion. It was empty, and she went in. The apartment was small, scantily furnished, and hung with dusky looking tapestry: as she was endeavouring to make out the meaning of a part of this, Hortensia heard a heavy footstep, as it were ascending the great staircase; and ashamed of her curiosity, she would have retreated from the room

she was in, but recollecting that if she did, she must meet the person, she contented herself with blowing out her taper, to prevent its light betraying that she was there; and determining to make a wish of re-lighting it serve as an excuse for her rambling thither, should she be discovered. But no discovery seemed likely to take place, and she cautiously opened a door opposite that into the gallery: from thence Hortensia entered a sort of open balcony, railed along the front: where it looked to, the darkness would not permit her to see; but she felt the railing, and found that it went up higher than her hand could reach; while by the coldness of some of the bars, she discovered them to be iron, placed

placed between the wooden ones. Wondering that a place usually devoted to pleasure should be made to wear the semblance of a prison, she was going to investigate whither it led to, when the indistinct sounds of a pleasing voice struck her ears; but the rustling of her gown (which was a black lutestring) almost drowned the noise, and she stopped, scarcely venturing to breathe, lest she should lose a word of the conversation that seemed going on in some room at the farther end of the balcony. The language was French, and the first words she distinguished, were these :

“But I am a prisoner, you know.”

“So am I,” replied a voice that might, or might not be a man’s; but the tones had none of the softness of

those of the last speaker, who now resumed :

“But when he comes here, and is talking to me, you may steal away, and go to the ladies; and tell them how poor Cecilia is confined, and shut up from those she loves.”

“Dearest lady——” began the other person, but was interrupted by her who called herself Cecilia, exclaiming—

“Oh, for pity’s sake do not deny me! Go to those dear English ladies; tell them that he has murdered him! and sent away poor Xaveira because she loved me, and used to weep for me——hush! hush!”

The voice ceased, and a quick foot-step was heard in its stead, which seemed going to a greater distance. Hortensia stepped

stepped forward a little, and listened; she heard nothing, however, but saw a faint flash of light on the wall of the balcony, apparently proceeding from a window in some opposite building: after the darkness of a moment, it again flashed from another window, and a figure, which appeared to be that of a female, glided past, and disappeared.

In a minute or two, the deliberations of Hortensia, whether she should explore any further, were terminated by a noise that she heard in the great gallery; and she hastened back to the small room leading to it. She had scarcely reached the door from the balcony, when she perceived the opposite one open, and M. de Celandelle, with a taper in his hand, entered the room.

Fortunately for Hortensia, who now dreaded observation, a slight gust of wind was so near leaving him in darkness, that he immediately placed his hand before the flame to preserve it from extinction, and in such a manner, that the light only shone on a very inconsiderable part of the room: she therefore softly retreated to a corner that was involved in deep shadow, and thence saw M. de Celandelle pass on into the balcony, she had no doubt, to visit his prisoner.

“Is it possible,” said Hortensia to herself as she hastily repassed the gallery, “that the mild, the apparently benevolent Celandelle, can be the tyrannical jailor of a hapless female.” But as she made this reflection it struck her that it
was

was something extraordinary, that a person should be a prisoner in a place to which she herself had free egress: so at least it certainly appeared, for she was confident there was no door between the place where she was and that which contained the hapless Cecilia. That she was confined her expressions left no room for doubt, but *how*, was a matter of mystery. Had her apartment been by chance or neglect left unsecured, it was more than probable that M. de Celandelle would have betrayed some signs of surprize or apprehension; instead of which, he had passed quietly on, without even seeming to observe that the doors were open which led to the balcony.

To clear up those doubts, Hortensia resolved to take the first opportunity of
returning

returning to the place she had but now abandoned, and endeavouring to find out who the person was that so much wished to communicate her sorrows to the "dear English ladies."

All the next day and the following one, Hortensia was continually on the watch for an opportunity of returning to the balcony, but in vain, as M. de Celandelle sat almost constantly in a small room opposite the one she had entered; and as the upper part of the door was glass, it rendered her subject to observation from the person she most wished to shun. Not a little vexed by the circumstance that thus prevented her investigations, Hortensia, on the third evening, went out to walk on the cliffs behind the house which she particularly
admired

admired from their resemblance to those of Beachy. As she slowly and silently paced the rough hewn path that led along the side of the rocks, she retraced in her mind every circumstance of M. de Celandelle's behaviour since she had known him, and now first recollected the name of Cecilia, being the one at which he betrayed so strong an emotion, on his mentioning having first seen her on the sea-shore; she remembered too his touching description of his former happiness and its loss; and was still more embarrassed to conjecture its meaning. While occupied with those ideas, the indistinct sounds of a man's voice near her made her look round, and she perceived a person whom she had often before seen rambling about the rocks, but
whom

whom she had never, till now, particularly observed. His figure was thin, but though very tall, his air might well be distinguished by a more striking epithet than genteel; it was at once graceful and dignified: his countenance, also, was of a kind to attract the attention of the beholder; his complexion was of a mahogany darkness, and his eyes large, black and penetrating: but though his features were strongly marked, the contour was far from displeasing. He appeared about the age of five or six and thirty; and the naval uniform which Hortensia now first perceived that he wore, while it proclaimed him an English subject, might also, in some measure, account for the sun-burnt tint of his complexion.

Such

Such was the stranger, who now stepping forward, presented to Hortensia the spying-glass, through which he had been looking at a fleet that was passing; and bowing, politely asked if Mademoiselle would not do him the honor to make use of it. Though he spoke in French, and his expressions were elegant, his apparent diffidence, made Hortensia say in English, when she restored the glass,

“These ships come from England; do they not?”

“They do, madam,” replied the stranger in the same language: without betraying the least surprize at her addressing him in it.

“But it is not the West-India fleet!”
resumed

resumed Hortensia, with a look of melancholy enquiry, as if she wished to be contradicted.

A transient smile passed over the countenance of the stranger, as he answered that it was not. Hortensia blushed, and was going to bid him good night, when observing that the stranger's eyes were fixed pensively on her face, she paused a moment; and then curtsy-ing, in silence turned from him. His respectful bow was unnoticed, but not so the deep sigh that accompanied it: it made an impression on Hortensia, and she was not sorry, when, returning the same way about a quarter of an hour afterwards, she perceived him standing in precisely the same spot where she had left him; but the spying-glass no longer afforded

afforded him amusement; it lay within his folded arms, and his eyes were fixed on the ground. In the place where he stood, the path was so extremely narrow, as to preclude the idea of Hortensia passing him unless he stepped to one side, and the consideration made her hesitate a few moments: she then advanced, and lingering a little as he stood aside to let her pass, said, "You often, I believe, ramble amongst those cliffs?"

"Oh, very often;" returned the stranger in a melancholy tone; but instantly seeming conscious that his reply was not perfectly polite, he added, "I sometimes walk here for hours together, even in the worst weather, and at night."

"What can possibly be your inducement?"

ment?" enquired Hortensia, surprized.

"From hence I can view the Chateau de Celandelle!" he answered.

Hortensia suddenly recollected the words of the imprisoned Cecilia, relative to her husband. "If this should be him!" thought she; and immediately enquired if he knew the inhabitants of the chateau.

"Oh, yes," he replied, deeply sighing.

"The knowledge is not then pleasurable?" said Hortensia, without considering the indecorum she was guilty of in asking the question.

The stranger answered: "It is not pleasurable to know that the walls I incessantly, almost, contemplate, contain one of the fairest of beings, and the
most

most beloved of my heart; and that a cruel and irresistible power, prevents me from presenting myself to her."

"Who is this person?" enquired Miss Sydney.

A deep glow suffused the face of the stranger at this question: Hortensia imagined it to be a blush of resentment; and she became instantly sensible of the impropriety of seeking the confidence of a person, of whose very name she was ignorant, and felt desirous of making an apology: none however seemed necessary, for the stranger replying, "I dare not tell you!" with an other deep and tremulous sigh, and hastened from her presence. She watched him, till he turned round an abrupt angle of the cliff; but he then appeared again station-

ary, for though Hortensia could no longer see him, she observed the tall shadow of his figure, which the glare of the setting sun cast strongly across the path he had just quitted. She stood looking on it for some minutes, but finding it did not move, returned home.

Hortensia had now an additional reason to wish to see the unhappy female, whom she believed to be the prisoner of de Celandelle; as she not unreasonably conjectured that this stranger was really the person whom she lamented as her husband. To this conclusion she was led by many circumstances: Cecilia, in desiring to have her captivity made known to the strangers, who, it was plain, she knew to be in the chateau, had particularized them as *English* ladies;

dies; and were her husband really of that country, it was natural she should wish to meet those to whom he might perhaps be known. The stranger, too, by his own account, contemplated almost incessantly the spot which contained a female, whom a cruel and irresistible power, prevented him from beholding. This power, was, in all probability, the stern guardianship of M. de Celandelle; and she determined, let what would be the consequence, to endeavour to see the forrowing Cecilia.

For this, an opportunity most unexpectedly occurred on that very night; for on her return to the chateau, the loquacious Madame de Polignac informed her, that M. de Celandelle expected a visitor that evening, and had

ordered supper (at a later hour than was usual to the family) to be sent to him and his guest into the study, where they sat; and Hortensia resolving no longer to delay her search for Cecilia, pretended indisposition, and retired to her own chamber.



C H A P. XIV.

"It is scarcely four years since the sun did not shine upon so fair, so quick witted, and amiable a maid."

STERNE.

HORTENSIA, after remaining long enough in her chamber to ascertain that there was no person in the gallery, or on the stairs, began to prepare for her expedition, by putting a small wax taper into a pocket lanthorn that William Davenant had given her; and having

ing adjusted it in such a manner, as in a moment, at her pleasure, to veil the light, stepped softly along the gallery, and met with no opposition to her progress, till she reached the farthest end of the balcony. She now perceived two galleries, or rather passages, similar to the one her chamber was in; one leading to the left and the other to the right, and she hesitated which to pursue; till recollecting, that the latter, in all probability, led to the place where she had seen the figure and the light, she turned to go that way; 'but a rising strain of harmony, proceeding from the gallery leading to the left, arrested her attention. It seemed at first only like trying the notes of an organ, but swelled into a full and solemn hymn, calculated

to inspire all the enthusiasm of devotion. Hortensia, after listening for a few minutes, followed the sound, which led her along a short detached passage, that terminated in the gallery of a small chapel, the organ of which produced those tones, so sweet and solemn, that had drawn Hortensia's attention.

She would now, if possible, have seen who the player was, but a high partition of wood divided her from the organ; and she found, that to discover the organist, she must go down into the chapel, and ascend into the gallery on the other side. But no means of descent into the chapel presented itself; and Hortensia, secure (as she believed) from discovery, and her further progress arrested, gave her undivided attention to
the

the music. It was no longer a strain of devotion, but harmony of that soft and melancholy species, that soothes the sad soul to peace, and leads the mind out of itself to the contemplation of something higher than this world; and as the organ grew fainter, a voice of most exquisite sweetness, and which was evidently a female one, commenced singing part of the midnight service to the virgin, common in Italy, and in some parts both of France and Spain. The notes were at first low and plaintive, but soon rose into the most sublime melody, with a fulness and clearness of tone, Hortensia had seldom heard equalled.

After some time, however, the music ceased, and Hortensia perceived a faint light to gleam as it were from the stairs
of

of the organ into the chapel beneath, and almost instantly a female figure entered the dark and gloomy aisle of the chapel, illuminated only by the taper she carried. She was habitted in white drapery, which (though with one hand she endeavoured to fold it round her) streamed far behind her on the dusky pavement, which returned no sound of footsteps as she passed along to a small door near the altar, which her light discovered to be half open; this she entered, and as she turned to close it, the bright gleam of the taper, discovered to Hortensia, a face, which only for the dark eyes and brows that distinguished it, might have passed for one carved in white marble. She now disappeared,
and

and the chapel was left in total darkness, except where an early moon cast a trembling ray, through the upper row of windows that were on a level with the organ.

Hortensia now observed the lady, to enter the stone gallery that ran along before those windows, and as she slowly passed between the pillars, she distinguished that her face was exceedingly lovely, though pale and thin, as was her tall and slender figure, almost to emaciation. She had already passed the third pillar, and Hortensia seeing her enter the hollow of the fourth, expected she would pass that also; instead of which, she there disappeared, as it should seem, through a door behind it.

Hortensia, now again in darkness (for she

She had veiled her light on first entering the chapel) had leisure to form conjectures; all tending to the enquiry, whether this lovely female were Cecilia? and if she were, whether she was, or had ever been a prisoner? Had she been so, in reality, and had now escaped from her confinement, it was highly improbable that she would act as she had done. She would not, certainly, run the most remote hazard of a discovery by carrying a light through the chapel, and still less, by playing on the organ.

Revolving those ideas in her mind, the fair Sydney now slowly returned by the way she came, and had just reached the balcony where she paused to consider whether she should venture to ex-

plore the passage leading to the right, when suddenly a door exactly opposite to her, softly opened, and the same person, whom she had seen in the chapel, advanced from it: her eyes were fixed on the floor, and though she passed quite close to Hortensia, whom surprise rooted to the spot where she stood, she did not appear to observe her; but she had scarcely proceeded ten steps, when she pronounced the name of "Hortense!" in a soft voice; and Miss Sydney was instantly convinced that it was Cecilia who spoke: but she neither stopped nor turned her head, and Hortensia yet hesitated whether to accept this invitation, till the name was repeated in a louder tone, and the door into the
balcony

balcony was again opened by an old woman, who, answering to the call, hastened after Cecilia. Too much alarmed by this incident, which had nearly betrayed her, for the further indulgence of curiosity, Hortensia, as speedily as possible, repassed the balcony, and the chamber leading to it, and, arriving in her own, sat down to ruminate on the circumstances she had observed. From this, however, she derived no solution of her doubts, no confirmation of her fears, or any sensation but perplexity and weariness: the latter of which urged her to go to bed, whilst the former entirely precluded rest.

Early on the following morning Hortensia arose, and leaving the house, resolved to walk round it, in order if pos-

fible to discover, whither the apartments, that she had twice seen Cecilia enter, looked to. For this purpose she turned to the side where was the chapel; but which she was prevented from approaching by a screen of forest trees, that shaded the west side of the chateau. It was necessary, therefore, that she should make a circuit round this, and in doing so, observed a small door, which was in general locked, stand half open; and through it, Hortensia perceived at a little distance, the double row of windows belonging to the chapel. She approached the door, and looking in, discovered an inclosure, which she plainly saw was a cemetery: a large and magnificent tomb, or rather mausoleum, stood in the midst, and all around it were a
number

number of more humble graves, which Hortensia conjectured to be those of the peasants of the estate; whilst that in which the seigneurs were interred was of more elevated structure. Perceiving that no person was in the cemetery, Hortensia entered it and looked around her with mingled awe and curiosity: she immediately caught a view of a mound of earth, close to the mausoleum, and approaching, perceived that it was a new made grave. While she contemplated this solemn object, a man in the habit of a monk, entered the cemetery, and advancing, said, "Bless you, my daughter!" with an air of unaffected piety and good-will that won the heart of Hortensia, and she returned, with as much meekness as if she had been a

catholic, and this her confessor.

“I thank you, father;” adding “’tis a fine morning.”

“It is, my child,” he answered, with a sigh; “It is indeed a lovely morning: to you, the day rises in smiles; but there are those to whom it dawns in tears, and its brightness cannot cheer them.”

“Near this place, father?—” said Hortensia, enquiringly.

“Very near,” replied the monk.

“Perhaps in the castle?——”

“In the castle!” echoed the monk, mournfully, and fixing a look of inconceivable sadness on the open grave, as he relapsed into total silence.

Hortensia’s attention was now entirely occupied by the religious; and as she had been accustomed to connect the idea
of

of old age with the habit of a monk, she felt some surprize at observing, that this person could not, from his looks, be above forty, if so much.

His person was not remarkable, but the expression of his countenance was singularly so. His dark and heavy eye, seemed to shun the silent commune of glances, but it appeared not the effect of fullness, or pride; on the contrary, when his regards happened to meet those of the person he conversed with, there was a benignity, mingled with sadness, in them, that gave the most favorable idea of his character. As for the rest of his features, they were too regularly fine, to be very interesting; but the melancholy that marked his countenance, seemed caused as much by their formation

tion, as the prevailing sentiment of his mind.

"This tomb," said Hortensia, as she rested her elbow on one of its prominent corners ;—"This tomb, it should seem, belongs to the family of de Celandelle?"

"It does ;" replied the monk, bowing.

"And I fear," rejoined Hortensia, "that it will not be long ere this age is unclothed. Monsieur de Celandelle, seems to droop daily."

"Indeed !" said the monk. "*Does the tyrant decline ?*"

"The tyrant ! Father !" cried Hortensia, in a voice of surprise ; adding, "Do you know aught of his tyranny ?"

"Do I know aught of it !" re-echoed the monk, whilst a deep crimson suffused his

his countenance, and his eyes, now raised to Hortensia's, animated by the fire of indignant recollection: "Do I know aught of his tyranny!—Oh, God! —Does not this tomb bear witness to his cruel despotism?—Was it not in this very spot that he tore the woman my soul adored from my arms?——"

The voice of the monk was almost lost in his emotions, and he paused; then added, in a tone of suppressed anguish—"And I lost her!"

Hortensia, whose mind was so entirely occupied by the idea of Cecilia's hapless destiny, that she might have said with Shakespeare,

"Methought the winds did sing it to me!"

immediately concluded that the monk
was

was in some manner concerned in it, and felt the extreme of curiosity and a desire to question him relative to it ; but after a silence of more than a minute, she rejoiced that she had not done so, when the monk pronounced the name of *Xaviera*! in a voice of such touching tenderness, as left her no room to doubt who it was that he lamented.

“My poor *Xaviera*!” he repeated, as, his eyes overflowing with tears, he abruptly turned away, and left the cemetery.

Hortensia hesitated a moment, and then followed him to the door, by which she had come in. She saw him with hasty steps crossing the open space of ground that lay between the chateau and a thick grove of pines, into the deep
shade

shade of which he soon struck, and was seen no more.

Hortensia, now, deeply ruminating, returned almost unconsciously to the house: as she passed along the great wall, she saw the door of the breakfast room open, and the English officer whom she had spoke with on the cliffs the night before, with every symptom of the greatest agitation in his appearance, issued from it, and without perceiving her, turned out of the house.

That day passed quietly away: it rained, and Hortensia was not permitted to go to her usual walk on the cliffs till late in the evening; when she did so, however, she did not meet the English officer. At supper M. de Celandelle informed

formed Mrs. Davenant that the Villa de Colombe would be ready to receive her family in two days; at the same time requesting that she would continue to honor his mansion by her presence, so long as his cousin Madame de Polignac remained at the chateau. To this Mrs. Davenant neither objected or assented, and soon afterwards, the party retired to their respective rooms.

When Hortensia reached hers, she once more began to recal to mind the occurrences of the last few days; every one of which, she now resolved to communicate to Mrs. Davenant (whom the persecuting attentions of Madame de Polignac, had of late never allowed a moment for the indulgence of friendly conversation with Hortensia) and thus
time

time glided imperceptibly away till past twelve; when a loud shrill shriek, and a sound, as if of somebody falling heavily, made her run into the gallery, where she found M. de Celandelle, and the old woman whom she had seen in the balcony, endeavouring to raise the fainting Cecilia from the floor, where she had sunk. Hortensia immediately joined them, and kneeling beside the inanimate sufferer, supported her head on her bosom, while she chafed one of her white and emaciated hands. She had been employed in this manner only a few moments, when Mrs. Davenant, whose room joined that of her friend, came out; and finding what was the matter returned for water, which she threw over the face of the invalid: ad-

vising at the same time that she should be conveyed into Hortensia's room; which was immediately done, and she was placed in a chair by the fire.

Here she in a short time revived, but it was only for a moment; for grasping Hortensia's arm, with a gripe, like that of a dying person, she again relapsed into insensibility. Hortensia terrified, endeavoured to uncloze her hand; but the fingers refused to unbend, till she was again restored to life; when clasping her arms round the neck of Miss Sydney, she hid her face in her bosom, and sobbed violently, though without shedding a tear.

As the excess of her emotion caused a faint glow to overspread her countenance,

nance, Mrs. Davenant (who was contemplating the fair form of the stranger) remarked that the delicacy of her shape, and the beauty of her face, were alike unequalled; but there was a wildness of expression in her lovely black eyes, as she cast a hasty glance on those who now surrounded her, that seemed to proclaim her a lunatic. This idea had struck Hortensia, but the terror it might naturally inspire was now lost in pity and admiration; while M. de Celandelle, in a voice of agony, said, "Come, my dear Cecilia! Let me lead you to your chamber."

The unhappy Cecilia gazed on him for a minute, with a mixture of wildness and sorrow in her looks; then, without

speaking a word, threw her arms again round Hortensia.

"My Cecilia! My child!" cried M. de Celandelle, "Come with me!"

"Not without *her*," replied the fair maniac, embracing Hortensia still closer.

"She is like my Edward!—Do you know him?—Do you know my Edward?" she added, looking wildly at her.

"For God's sake indulge her," said M. de Celandelle softly. "For three years her sweet senses have been continually wandering.

The beautiful maniac now repeated her question with an earnestness that shewed her malady to be sinking into its most affecting melancholy state; for she smiled faintly as she added, "Per-
haps

haps you will not tell me now; but come to my chamber, and there we will speak of him, and I will shew you his picture."

The touching air of supplication her countenance wore, as she awaited the answer of Hortensia, almost determined her to comply with her wishes: but she no longer hesitated, when she beheld the tearful eyes of the venerable de Celandelle, fixed on her, with a look of such persuasive anxiety, as proved what he desired to be done: she therefore assisted Cecilia to rise, and whispering Mrs. Davenant not to leave the room till her return, they entered the gallery, followed by M. de Celandelle and the old woman. Cecilia, who seemed to recover strength at every step, led Hor-

tenfia through the balcony, and feveral long and gloomy paffages, to a bedroom elegantly furnished. A large water fpaniel was ftretched on the hearth; and on the floor lay a harp, which feemed to have been thrown down by the perfon who had been playing on it; and who could be only Cecilia, as the old woman was not likely to perform on that inftrument.

Cecilia now drew Hortenfia to the bedfide, near which hung a portrait of a very fine young man; which (as it was the only one in the room) ſhe concluded was that of her hufband. The poor lunatic fixed her eyes ftedfaſtly on the portrait for ſome time; then looked at Hortenfia, then again at the portrait, and ſo alternately for ſeveral minutes; ſaying

saying at last with the utmost seriousness, "No!—that is not him!—you are him!"

"Thank god!" exclaimed M. de Celandelle fervently, "for this little dawn of reason!" "No, my poor Cecilia! that is not thy Edward!"

"Where is he?" cried she with quickness, as she threw her eyes impatiently round the room, as if expecting to see him.

M. de Celandelle could not stand this, and burst into tears: Cecilia gazed on him for a minute, and seemed evidently endeavouring to recal some idea, whilst she appeared to suffer even a painful degree of curiosity; but soon sinking into forgetfulness, she sat down in her easy chair. The dog, which had risen from the hearth at the sound of her voice,

voice, now put its two fore-paws in her lap, and looked up wistfully in her face: she caressed it fondly, and the old woman whispered Hortensia, that this was the time for her to make her escape; but the moment she attempted to move, Cecilia caught hold of her, with a distracted vehemence in her manner that terrified her extremely: the old woman endeavoured to force open her fingers, but she shrieked so violently that she was obliged to desist.

Hortensia, finding herself thus compelled to remain with the unhappy lunatic, would not wound M. de Celandelle, by making any further attempts to escape; since that must prove that she was afraid of his unfortunate child, whom she now assisted to undress, M.
de

de Celandelle having retired till she should be in bed. It was not without some difficulty that Cecilia could be prevailed on to let her cloaths be taken off: but gazing intently on Hortensia, she sometimes cast an eye for an instant on the portrait; always returning with apparent pleasure to Miss Sydney.

At length, however, she fell asleep, and Hortensia quitted the room with M. de Celandelle, who came to conduct her to that she had left. As they passed the galleries, he told her he had been with Mrs. Davenant, to whom he referred her for the history of his daughter; he then bade her good night and left her.

No sooner was Hortensia seated by the fire in her own apartment, than she

she enquired of Mrs. Davenant, regarding Cecilia.

“He informed me,” replied Mrs. Davenant, “that this lovely young creature was his daughter, who, little more than four years ago, was as remarkable for her understanding as for her beauty. At that time she went to Bourdeaux, on a visit to her aunt, who resided there, and with whom she remained near a year. On her return home, she looked pale and dejected, affecting solitude very much; and never joining her father and sister, (which last is since dead) except at meals.

One day, about a fortnight after her return, her sister Xaviera, requested her to assist her with some work; and Cecilia complied, appearing more cheerful

ful than she had yet been: it was then that a servant presented her a letter, which she had no sooner read, than she fell from her chair in strong convulsions. Her father and sister assisted in conveying her to bed; where, in about six hours, she brought into the world a dead infant, which seemed to be born prematurely.

The situation the family must be in, on such an event, may be easily conceived; and as the luckless Cecilia continued in a most alarming state, no explanation could be required from her. Monsieur de Celandelle, in the utmost consternation, went in search of the letter which seemed to have occasioned the illness of his daughter; but it was
not

not to be found; and it appeared probable that it had fallen into the fire, as the work she had had on her lap at the time, was lying on the hearth, half burned. He then opened her bureau, and found in it several letters, evidently addressed by a man to a woman, whom he considered as his wife; but bearing no other signature than Edward. They were in French; yet it was easily discovered that it was not the native language of the writer: and there were no other papers in the bureau, or in any other place that was searched by the anxious parent, which could in the least elucidate the mystery, that seemed to hang over the fate of Cecilia.

Monfieur de Celandelle then wrote to his fister at Bourdeaux, to make enquiries

quiries relative to the intimates of his daughter, while in that city, particularly what gentlemen were most favoured by her. The aunt wrote him word that her neice had never appeared in the slightest degree partial to any of her male acquaintances; nor to any female, but a widow lady with whom she used to spend much of her time; but who, a fortnight before the present æra, had (with her two old servants) been burned to death, by the accident of her house, which was remote from the town, taking fire in the night.

“Thus was the mystery of Cecilia’s strange fate rendered entirely impenetrable; and unless she recovers her reason, will probably ever remain so. Since the fatal event of her miscarriage, she

has been in a state of continual insanity, which, in its perturbed fits, admits of no soothing influence, but that of music. Her time is chiefly spent in exercising her talents for this science, which are very great: but she sometimes spends long intervals in gazing on a portrait of her brother (who has been dead many years) which hangs in her apartment, and which she says represents her Edward. Her sole companion (except when her father pays her his mournful visits) is a large water spaniel that she brought with her from Bourdeaux; given her as she at first said by her friend the widow; but since her insanity, she declares that Perdrix is the gift of her husband, whose fir-name has yet never escaped her lips;
nor

nor has she given any clue, by which even his country can be discovered.

“Poor Cecilia is entirely secluded, even from the knowledge of every person; none, or scarce any, being acquainted with the circumstance of her being in the chateau.”

Mrs. Davenant ceased; and Hortensia, who had given many tears to the recital of the sad story of the beautiful Cecilia, now mentioned the circumstances she had intended, relative to the English officer she had so often seen in her walks; and who, she was now pretty certain, must be the husband of the hapless daughter of de Celandelle.

Mrs. Davenant objected the probability of this being the case; reminding her young friend of her having seen him

issuing in evident agitation from the library of their host; and if that agitation had been caused, as Hortensia supposed it might be, by the idea of his wife, M. de Celandelle could no longer be in ignorance of the husband of Cecilia.

The friends now parted, and retired to rest.



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

